The CURLYTOPS IN THE WOODS

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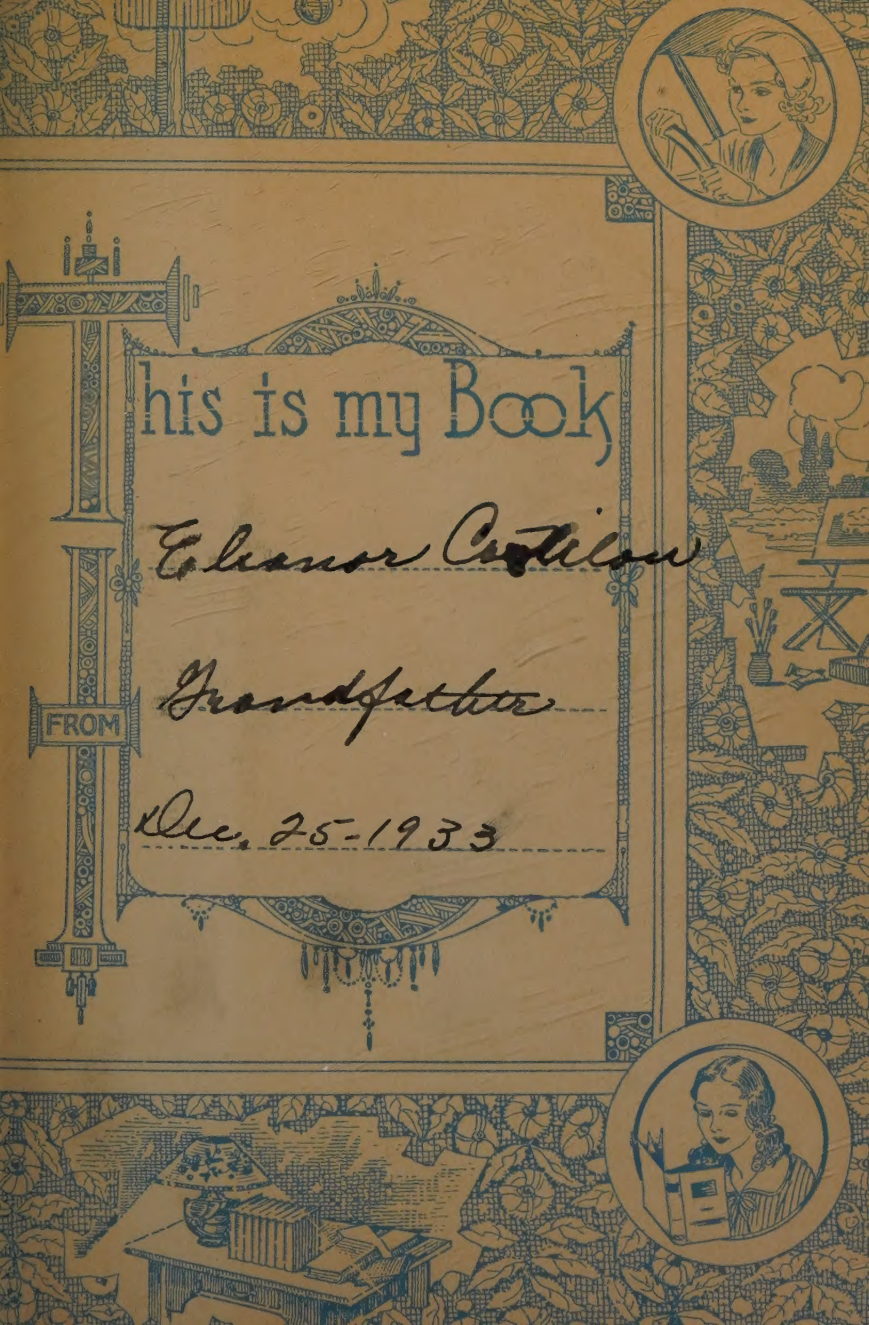
HOWARD R. GARIS


This is my Book
Eleanor Cotton
FROM
Grandfather
Dec. 25-1933

"OH, JANET! WHY DID YOU HIDE IN THE TRUNK?" ASKED MRS. MARTIN.

THE CURLYTOPS IN THE WOODS

OR

Fun at the Lumber Camp

BY

HOWARD R. GARIS

AUTHOR OF "THE CURLYTOPS AT CHERRY FARM,"
"THE CURLYTOPS AND THEIR PLAYMATES,"
"UNCLE WIGGILY STORIES," ETC.

Illustrations by
JULIA GREENE

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THE CURLYTOPS SERIES

By HOWARD R. GARIS

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THE CURLYTOPS AND THEIR PLAYMATES
Or, Jolly Times Through the Holidays
THE CURLYTOPS IN THE WOODS
Or, Fun at the Lumber Camp

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THE CURLYTOPS IN THE WOODS

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THE CURLYTOPS IN THE WOODS

CHAPTER I

PLAYING HOUSE

"TROUBLE! Trouble! Look out! You're knocking over the piano!" Janet Martin called this to her little brother William, who, because of the mischief he so often got in, was nicknamed "Trouble."

"Where's piano I knock over?" asked Trouble, who was still small enough not to be expected to talk quite properly. "I didn't was knock over any piano," he added.

"There! You've knocked it over *now!*" cried Janet, with a wail of despair, as a small box, which Trouble kicked with his chubby foot, fell down the steps of the back porch. "You knocked over the piano."

"Oh!" exclaimed Trouble soberly, as he watched his brother Ted bringing other boxes to pile on the porch where the children were playing house that pleasant summer afternoon. "Oh, my! I knock over piano,"

went on William, still very grave and serious. "Zat's funny piano," he added. "It's only a *box!*"

"Well, we're pretending it's a piano," remarked Janet, as she picked the box up from the ground where it had tumbled after Trouble accidentally kicked it. "You have to pretend when you're playing house," she added.

"What's Trouble done now?" asked Ted, as he put one of his boxes on the porch and the other down on the ground near the steps. "That's the garage for our automobile," he said, pointing to the box on the ground.

"Oh, that'll be nice!" exclaimed Janet. "I didn't know we were going to have an auto. This is a lovely playhouse!" she said, laughing.

Ted and Janet often played house in this way, setting up a sort of one-floor apartment on the back porch, with different rooms marked off by sticks laid on the floor of the porch. In each of these "rooms" were put different pieces of furniture. Most of the furniture was just boxes, or perhaps an old broken chair or two, or even some sticks and boards. But to the Curlytops the playhouse was very real. Only Trouble

could not "pretend" as well as could his older brother and sister. Ted liked to play house with Janet, even if he was a boy.

"What's that other box for?" asked Janet of Ted, when she had made Trouble sit down on a small, broken doll's chair in what was the "kitchen" of the playhouse.

"That's going to be the cupboard," answered Ted. "And we can——"

"Old Mother Hubbard went to her dog's cupboard!" sang Trouble.

"It wasn't her dog's cupboard, it was her own," corrected Janet.

"Yes it *was* dog's cupboard," insisted Trouble. " 'Cause she went there to get him a bone, but it was bare. Does it mean the bone didn't have any clothes on?" asked Trouble of his brother.

"Of course not!" laughed Ted. "Bones don't wear clothes. It means the cupboard was bare—it didn't have even a bone in it for the dog."

"Well, it was *dog's* cupboard all right!" still insisted the little boy. "You goin' have Mother Hubbard's cupboard here?" he asked.

"No, this is going to be our own cupboard," answered Ted, as he set up the other

box he had carried out from the barn. "And we'll have real things to eat to put in our cupboard, too," he added.

"No! Not *really?*" cried Janet, with shining eyes.

"Really and truly," insisted Teddy. "Look, mother said I could take these cookies," and he pulled half a dozen or more from his pocket.

"Oh, we'll have a lovely playhouse!" exclaimed Janet. "I'll make believe I'm the cook, and you must go to work, Ted, and come home and I'll have your supper ready and I'll dress up as mother does when daddy comes home to supper."

"All right," agreed Ted. "Do you know where I work, Jan?"

"No," she answered.

"I'm conductor on an airship!" laughed Teddy. "I'll climb up in a tree and make believe that's an airship."

"This is more fun than we ever had before!" cried Janet. "Oh, Trouble, you mustn't go in there!" she added, as she saw her small brother picking his way over the sticks that were laid down in squares to mark off the different rooms.

"Not go here?" questioned Trouble, paus-

ing with one foot in one room, and the other in another apartment.

"No, you mustn't go in there!" insisted Janet. "That's the parlor and your feet are all dirty. You can't go in the parlor with dirty shoes!"

"All right," agreed Trouble. "Could I have cookie from pantry?" he asked, watching Ted set up the box and put in it some of the good things from the real kitchen.

"Yes, you can have a cookie when I get Ted's dinner," agreed Janet. "Now you go out and play in the yard, and when you hear the whistle blow that will mean Daddy Ted is coming home, and you must come in and eat with us."

"Can I eat real—have some cookie?" asked Trouble.

"Yes, we'll let you eat real," laughed Janet. "But don't knock over the piano again," she begged, as she again set up the box that Trouble had sent toppling down the steps.

"I not knock over no more," he promised.

"Here, you make believe you're a miner digging for gold," suggested Ted, giving his small brother a shovel and pointing to a soft place in the dirt of the yard. "And when

I go 'Toot! Toot!' that means it's the twelve o'clock whistle and you stop work."

"An' then we eat!" cried Trouble.

"Yes, then we eat," agreed Ted. "Now I'm going to be a conductor in my airship," he added, as he climbed into the branches of a tree near the back porch. Trouble began digging with his shovel in the soft dirt, and Janet arranged the different rooms of the playhouse to suit her own ideas, placing a bunch of leaves on the "piano" as an ornament.

"Janet! Janet! Oh, Jan!" suddenly cried Trouble, after a few minutes of digging.

"What's the matter now?" asked his sister, as her small brother looked up from his digging. "Did you hurt yourself?"

"No, but I is not goin' to be miner an' dig for gold," he declared.

"What are you going to be then?" Ted wanted to know.

"I be fisherman diggin' for worms," decided Trouble. " 'At's most fun 'cause I got a worm right now."

"All right, be a fisherman and dig for worms," agreed Janet. "Don't let him spoil anything in the playhouse," she called to

Teddy up in the tree. "I'm going to ask mother something."

"All right," replied Ted. "Are you going after more cookies?"

"No, I'm going to see if mother will let me take her little diamond locket," answered Janet. "I mean the one with the teeny little diamond in. I want to wear it when I dress up and make believe I'm a lady getting my husband's supper."

"Oh, all right," laughed Ted. "But I don't believe mother will let you take her diamond locket."

"I guess she will if I promise to be careful of it," said Janet.

She went into the house, while Ted continued to play that he was a conductor on an airship, taking up tickets from the make-believe passengers. Trouble kept on digging worms, carefully putting them in a tin can.

Janet found her mother out in the front yard, talking to Mrs. Jenk, a neighbor, and both ladies were laughing.

"What are you laughing at?" asked Janet, before she asked to be allowed to wear the diamond ornament.

"It's Mr. Jenk's tame crow," answered

Mrs. Martin. "He really is so funny! He ought to be in a show. Look at him!"

She pointed to the open window of Mrs. Jenk's house, where, on the sill, was perched a black crow. This crow had been caught by Mr. Jenk in the woods some years before. He had tamed the bird, which was lame from having been injured in a trap, and now it could do quite a number of tricks, besides saying a few words, or what sounded like words. The lame, tame crow could also whistle, often fooling Skyrocket, the Curlytops' dog.

Just now the crow was marching up and down on the window sill, going limpity-limp, for one leg was shorter than the other. Suddenly Mrs. Jenk tapped on the fence with a stick, and, at the same time, she snapped her fingers.

Instantly the lame, tame crow stood on his good leg, cocked his head to one side and stuck his short, lame leg out to one side, standing in this funny position as stiff and motionless as a stuffed bird. Then, suddenly, he made several popping sounds like corks being pulled from bottles.

"Oh, isn't he funny!" laughed Janet. "He ought to be in a show!"

"Yes, Mr. Jenk had an offer from a theatrical man who wanted to put Jim in a show," said Mrs. Jenk. "This man said our crow was quite valuable, but Mr. Jenk didn't want to let him go. He says he is going to teach Jim more tricks."

"Oh, I hope he does!" cried Janet. The crow stood on two legs again, and once more marched up and down the window sill. "Do you think I could make him stand that funny way and pop?" asked Janet.

"Try it," suggested Mrs. Jenk.

The little girl tapped on the fence and snapped her fingers.

Instantly Jim stiffened, cocked his head on one side, stuck out his lame leg and stood on the other, stiff and motionless. Then he went:

"Pop! Pop! Pop!"

"Oh, I did it! I did it!" laughed Janet, as Mrs. Jenk went in the house. "I'm going to do it again."

But this time the crow did no tricks. Perhaps he was tired of showing off. At any rate he flew into a tree over in the yard back of the home of the Curlytops. Jim was allowed to fly about as he pleased, and was well known in the neighborhood. He always

flew home at night, though, and slept in the kitchen.

"Oh, Mother!" called Janet, as she saw Mrs. Martin turning to go in the house. "Could I take your little diamond locket? Not the big one, just the little teeny one."

Mrs. Martin had two diamond lockets, one a very expensive one, and the other not so valuable. This small one had been given to her by her husband when the Martins did not have as much money as they had now. And for this reason Janet's mother thought more of her small ornament than she did of her more costly one.

"I just want to wear it playing house on the back porch," Janet went on.

"Will you be very careful of it and bring it back to me as soon as you have finished playing?" asked Mrs. Martin.

"Oh, yes," promised the little girl. "I'll be ever so careful, and I won't let Trouble or Ted have it."

"Well, Ted would be all right," said Mrs. Martin. "But Trouble might drop it and step on it. I'll let you take it for a half hour or so."

She took the locket, with its tiny diamond, from her jewelry box, and gave it into the

eager hands of Janet. The little girl's eyes sparkled like twin diamonds as she clasped the ornament about her neck.

"Now be careful of it!" cautioned her mother, as Janet went back to play house with Ted and Trouble.

"I will!" the little girl promised.

Ted was getting down out of the tree when Janet reached the porch, and Trouble was digging in a new place for worms.

"You were gone a long time," said Ted. "I blew the whistle three times. I got to have my dinner," he went on, " 'cause the ship's got to sail to China right away soon."

"Oh, all right, I'll get your dinner quick," offered Janet, pretending to be serious. "I just stopped a minute to look at the tame crow," she said. "He stood on one leg for me."

"He's done it for me, too," said Ted.

"And he could be in a show if he wanted to, only Mr. Jenk won't sell him," added Janet.

"Maybe we could get up a circus and have him in one of the acts," suggested Ted. "Oh, mother let you take the diamond, didn't she?" he asked, as he saw the sparkle on Janet's neck.

"Yes, I can wear it while we play house," she answered. "Now I'll get dinner. Did you blow the whistle for Trouble to come?" she asked.

"Yes, I did. But he says he's a fisherman, and fishermen only come when a horn blows, so I got to blow a horn," laughed Ted.

"Honk! Honk," he went, pretending to be a horn. Then Trouble dropped his shovel and hurried to the "house" to get some of the cookies before his brother and sister might eat them all.

The children sat on some little chairs that had once been a doll's furniture set belonging to Janet, and they ate bits of cookies off a box that formed the "dining-room table."

"We're having lots of fun!" said Janet.

"Piles of it!" agreed Ted.

"I likes it lots," declared Trouble. "What you takin' off ma's diamond for?" he asked Janet, for she was unclasping the locket from her neck.

"I have to wash the dishes," she answered, "and you never wash dishes with a diamond locket on."

"Let me see locket!" begged Trouble, as Janet was about to lay it on the box that served as the cupboard.

"Be very careful of it!" cautioned Janet. She let her small brother take the sparkling ornament in his hand and admire it for a few moments. Then Janet took it again and put it on the box. She was preparing to "wash the dishes," which was only make-believe, of course; Trouble was again digging in his hole; Ted was up in the tree, pretending to be an airship conductor; when suddenly there sounded a loud crash in front of the house.

"Something's happened!" exclaimed Janet.

"I go see!" offered Trouble, dropping his shovel.

"It's an automobile smash-up!" shouted Ted. "I can see it from here!" and he began to scramble down from the tree. "Two cars are smashed up!" he went on.

The two Curlytops and Trouble hurried to the front gate, anxious to see what had happened.

CHAPTER II

THE MISSING DIAMOND

THREE or four men, half a dozen boys and a policeman were running toward the two automobiles that, as Ted had said, were in a "smash-up." The accident had happened directly in front of the home of the Curlytops, and they were anxious to know if anyone had been hurt. They also wanted to know how it had happened.

"My, that one car is all smashed!" cried Janet.

"They're both smashed!" said Ted.

"It's like when my toy train ran into the stove!" said Trouble, trying to wiggle his way between his brother and sister so that he might first get out of the front gate and nearer to the scene of the accident.

Just then Skyrocket, the Curlytops' dog, came rushing, barking, out of the house. He, too, had heard the excitement.

"Look out, Trouble! Look out!" cried Janet, as she saw what was about to happen. But it was too late. Skyrocket tried to dash between the legs of little William, but the opening was not wide enough, and Trouble stumbled and fell in a heap on the dog.

Dog and boy howled together, though neither of them was much hurt. At the same time Janet saw the policeman lift a man from one of the wrecked cars.

"Oh, I guess they'll have to take him to the hospital!" she exclaimed.

"Maybe," agreed Ted, as he stopped to pick Trouble up, finding that his small brother was more frightened than hurt.

Then the three Martin children proceeded on out into the street to look at the accident, about which had gathered a crowd of men and boys, with a few girls and women.

And while the policeman is trying to find out how it all happened, and look after the two injured men—for there were two—this will be a chance to let my new readers know a little something about the Curlytops—who they were, where they lived, and what they had done up to this time. I will not take very long in telling it, as I think you want to keep on with the story part.

Ted, or Teddy, whose real name was Theodore, and Janet, or "Jan," as she was called for short, were the children of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Martin, who owned a large store in Cresco, in an eastern state. Because of their ringlets of golden hair, Ted and Janet were called Curlytops, and under that name I have written several books about them. The first volume is called "The Curlytops at Cherry Farm," and while there the children, including small William Anthony Martin, otherwise known as "Trouble," had many adventures.

Following that the Curlytops went to Star Island, they were snowed in, they visited at Uncle Frank's ranch, and spent a vacation at Silver Lake. Then they helped take care of some animal pets belonging to Uncle Toby, and just before the present story I told of the adventures of Ted, Janet and Trouble in the book named "The Curlytops and Their Playmates."

The Curlytops—and I include Trouble with them, though his hair did not curl as did that of Ted and Janet—were always playing and having adventures, just as you have read about them starting to play house in this book.

As I have mentioned, Trouble was always in mischief of some sort or other, and often it might not be his fault—it was more of an accident, as when Skyrocket the dog tried to run between the legs of the little fellow.

For a time all was forgotten about playing house. Janet gave no more heed to being dressed like a lady to get Daddy Ted's supper. Ted forgot all about playing conductor in the tree airship, and while Trouble was with his brother and sister looking at the auto accident, all the worms he had dug crawled out of the shallow can into which he had put them, and away they wiggled.

The accident was rather a serious one. Two cars had come together with a loud crash right in front of the Curlytops' house, and both were badly damaged. The driver of each one was hurt and Policeman Kelly had to call the ambulance to take them both to the hospital.

"How did it happen?" asked Ted of Harry Kent, one of his chums.

"I didn't see it," Harry answered; "but I heard a man say one car tried to turn the corner and the man in it didn't put his hand out."

"You ought always to put your hand out

when you're going to turn a corner," said Ted.

"Sure you ought," agreed Harry. "I guess he'll do it after this."

"Here comes the ambulance!" cried Janet, as a loudly clanging bell was heard down the street. Up dashed the vehicle and soon the doctor was attending to the two men, who had been laid on the grass near the curb.

After putting some bandages on the injured men the doctor had some bystanders help him lift them into the ambulance and away they were taken, leaving the two smashed cars for the crowd to stare at.

The Curlytops met many of their friends at the accident, for boys and girls, hearing of it, came from the near-by houses. And Ted, Janet and Trouble knew most of the girls and boys for several blocks around.

The excitement of the accident drove all thoughts of playing house from the minds of the Curlytops and they remained out in front of their house so long, talking with their playmates, that it was time for Mr. Martin to come home from the store for supper before Ted and Janet thought of what they had been doing. Mrs. Martin had also

come out to look at the wrecked automobiles, but had gone inside again, to tell the cook about the meal.

"Well, Curlytops, did you do this?" asked Daddy Martin, with a laugh, as he stopped in front of his house to watch men from a garage starting to take away the wrecked cars. "I suppose Trouble did the most of it," added Mr. Martin.

"I not mash those autos!" cried Trouble, evidently thinking his father was in earnest. "They did mash up theirselves!"

"And a pretty good piece of work they made of it," said Mr. Martin. "Anyone hurt, Curlytops?" he asked.

"The two drivers," said Ted.

There was a rustling in the tree under which the children stood talking with their father, and, looking up, Janet cried:

"It's Jim, Mr. Jenk's crow!"

"He's flying home," added Ted

"Well, what have you been doing all day, children?" asked Mr. Martin. "Don't take that, Trouble!" he quickly cried, as the little boy pulled some papers from the side pocket of his father's coat. "I need those. I'll have to use them if I go to Mount Major to open a store for the lumber camp."

"Oh, are you going away?" cried Janet.

"For a while, maybe," her father answered, as he looked to make sure Trouble had taken none of his papers.

"When are you going?" asked Ted. "Mount Major is where they cut lumber, isn't it, Dad?"

"Yes, they cut a great deal of lumber there," said Mr. Martin, as he watched the lame, tame crow of his neighbor fly down into a tree in Mr. Jenk's yard. "And they are starting work for the summer now, felling a lot of trees to get ready to saw up into lumber this fall. They want me to go up there and start a store, so the lumbermen may be able to buy things to eat without having to travel so far."

"Are you going?" asked Janet.

"When?" inquired Ted once more.

"Oh, it's too early to talk about that now," laughed Mr. Martin. "But tell me what you Curlytops did all day. I suppose you studied your lessons, didn't you?"

"Lessons? On Saturday!" cried Janet, not seeing the funny twinkle in her father's eyes.

"He's only joking!" declared Ted, and

this was true. Mr. Martin liked to tease his children a little.

"Well, what were you doing?" he asked. "It looks as though Trouble had been digging in the garden," he added.

"I was diggin' worms for to go fishin' with," said the little boy.

"And he fell down when Skyrocket tried to run between his legs," added Teddy.

"That was when we heard the auto crash and all ran out to see what it was," explained Janet. "Before that we were playing house, and Trouble was going to be a miner, and Ted was a conductor on an airship up in a tree, and I was—Oh, I was——"

Janet suddenly stopped speaking, clapped her hand over her mouth and started to run around to the back porch.

"I forgot all about it!" she cried.

"What is it?" asked Mr. Martin, for he could tell by Janet's face that it was something important. "What did she forget about?" asked Mr. Martin of Ted and Trouble.

The two boys shook their heads. Their father followed Janet around to the back door and the brothers went with him. They saw Janet eagerly searching about the play-

house, looking on and in boxes and around the chairs and pieces of wood. Just then Mrs. Martin came to the back door. She greeted her husband with a kiss and then, turning to Janet, she said:

"Please give me back my diamond locket, my dear. You have played with it long enough."

"Oh, Mother!" gasped Janet. "Haven't you—didn't you come out and take it? Haven't you your locket?"

"Why, no, Janet, I haven't it," was the surprised answer. "I let you take it and you said you would bring it back to me."

"I know I did, and I meant to. I took it off my neck to wash the dishes after our play dinner, and Trouble asked me to let him look at it and—Oh, Trouble, you have mother's locket, haven't you? That's right, I let you take it. What did you do with it? Where is mother's shiny gold and diamond locket, Trouble?"

Trouble looked surprised.

"I no have got it," he said.

"But I let you take it!" insisted Janet. "You wanted to hold it in your hand because it sparkled so nice, and I let you. Didn't you have the locket, Trouble?"

"Yes, I did have," gravely admitted the small boy. "An' it was pretty. It shined like the sun. But I gived it back to you, Jan. You put it on the box in the play kitchen. Don't you 'member? I gived it back to you out of mine own hand!"

Janet gave a start and looked at the box. She remembered now.

"Yes, that's right, Trouble. You did give it back to me after I let you take it," she said slowly. "You gave it back to me and I put it on the box so I wouldn't catch anything in the chain when I unset the play table and washed the dishes. Ted, you didn't take the locket, did you?" she asked, turning to her older brother.

"No," he answered. "But I saw you put it on the box. It ought to be there now."

"Well, it isn't," and there were tears in Janet's eyes. "Oh, Mother," she half sobbed, "I can't find your lovely diamond locket! I'm afraid it's lost!"

Mrs. Martin looked anxious, for the locket was one she prized very highly. She did not want to lose it.

"Perhaps it may have been knocked off the box when you all ran out to see the auto accident," suggested Mr. Martin. "Be care-

ful where you step, and we'll look around the porch."

This was done, but with all the searching no diamond locket was found. Mrs. Martin helped, and after all the boxes, boards and toy furniture had been cleared from the rear porch the place was carefully swept.

"Well, I guess it's gone," said Mr. Martin, looking at his wife. "I shall have to buy you another."

"I don't want any other!" exclaimed Mrs. Martin, with tears in her eyes. "I want my own dear little diamond locket! Oh, Janet, why did you lose it?"

"I—I didn't mean to," and Janet began to sob.

"Oh, I know you didn't, child," said her mother, patting the curly head. "I shouldn't have given in to you and let you take it. Are you sure Trouble didn't drop it somewhere?"

"I no take it!" stoutly cried William. "I did hab locket but I gived it back to Jan and she losted it. I not lost *everything!*" and he was quite indignant about it, for Trouble knew that he had no very good reputation about losing things.

"Yes, Trouble gave it back to me," de-

clared Janet. "And I put it on the box. Maybe I picked it up again and was going to put it on my neck when the auto crash happened. I don't exactly remember what I did with it. Oh, dear, I wish I could find it!"

"Never mind," consoled Mrs. Martin. "If it's gone it can't be helped. We'll look around the yard to-morrow."

But before the next day came something else happened.

It was after supper in the home of the Curlytops. They had been talking over the events of the day, including the tricks of Jim, the black crow, the loss of the locket, and the auto crash, when the telephone bell jingled. Mr. Martin answered, but at almost the first words he heard over the wire he cried:

"What's that? My store on fire? I'll be right down!"

CHAPTER III

THE LOST CROW

You can imagine better than I can tell you how much excitement there was in the home of the Curlytops when Mr. Martin cried:

"My store is on fire!"

Mrs. Martin was so excited that she dropped one of Trouble's stockings she was darning. Inside was a round wooden stocking-darner that fell to the floor with a crash.

"Oh, Daddy!" cried Jan, in alarm. It seemed a terrible thing to know that her father's store was burning.

As for Mrs. Martin, after she had dropped the stocking, she sat looking at her husband, not knowing what to say.

Ted cried:

"Send for the fire engines!"

"They're already there!" said Mr. Martin, as he ran from the room.

"I'm coming!" shouted Ted, following his father.

"No, you mustn't go! Stay here!" commanded his mother.

"I got a little fire engine!" was what Trouble said. He did not understand that a big engine, pumping much water, was needed to put out a large fire.

"Please, Mother, I just got to go!" pleaded Ted, as he reached the door, out of which his father had hurried. "I want to help daddy!"

Mrs. Martin was too dazed and surprised to say again that Teddy should not go. She knew that he wanted to help, and he also wanted to see a fire. Any boy would.

It was early, hardly dark yet, and Mr. Martin's store was not far away. Ted had often gone down there alone in the evening.

"Be careful!" Ted's mother called to him, as he ran out of the front door and down the street after his father. There were other men and boys on the sidewalk now, all running toward the scene of the fire. There were even some women and a few girls. But Jan remained at home with her mother and Trouble.

Mr. Martin heard pattering behind him

the sound of little feet that he knew well. Turning, he saw Ted.

"You'd better go back," warned the boy's father.

"Please, I want to come! I'll help!" promised the Curlytop lad.

"I'm afraid you can't help very much," said Mr. Martin. "But as long as you have come this far, I'll have to take you. Give me your hand!"

With his father's fingers clasping his, Ted found it much easier to run along. They were nearing the store and now could hear the tooting and clanging of the engines and the shouts of men and boys, mingled with the barking of dogs. Mr. Martin, in his excitement, was running so fast that Ted could hardly keep up, but the Curlytop boy managed to skip along, never letting go his father's hand.

Suddenly, as they turned a corner, Mr. Martin and Ted saw the crowd in the street. They saw one engine pumping water, and another, with smoke pouring from the stack, was getting ready to work. There was also a cloud of smoke coming from an outside shed of Mr. Martin's store.

"The fire's in the shed, Ted!" exclaimed

the boy's father, in relief. "I guess it won't amount to very much."

"I'm glad of that," Ted answered. It was about all he could say, for he was quite out of breath from having run so fast with his father.

Just then there was a sudden banging and popping noise, and a shower of sparks shot out from the shed attached to the store. Then came some balls of colored fire and next a skyrocket sailed out over the fire engines and over the heads of the crowd, bursting with a pop up in the air. Then more beautifully colored sparks, stars, and balls of fire were scattered about.

"Oh, what is it, Daddy? Fourth of July?" cried Ted.

"That's just about what it is," answered Mr. Martin. "I wonder——"

His voice was drowned in another burst of sparks from the shed, followed by another skyrocket and then some more loud poppings. Out of the shed rushed a fireman, crying:

"There's a lot of Roman candles and skyrockets going off in there! It isn't a fire at all!"

As he spoke another skyrocket whizzed

over his head and the crowd began to laugh.

"Fourth of July! Fourth of July!" yelled some boys, capering about. They yelled again as many colored balls from some Roman candles shot into the air.

"You're celebrating Independence Day a little out of season, aren't you, Mr. Martin?" asked a man in the crowd.

"It begins to look that way," laughed Mr. Martin. "I see what happened. I had some fireworks stored in the shed. In some way the box must have caught fire."

Another rocket shot up, then some firecrackers exploded and next came a glare of red fire.

"Hurray! Hurray!" shouted the boys in the crowd, and Ted could not help joining in, for this was the jolliest fire he had ever seen.

With the burst of red fire the display came to an end, the glare died away, there was no longer any popping from the firecrackers, and all that could be seen was a lot of smoke pouring from the shed.

"I guess the worst is over," said the fire chief, as he told the fireman, who had run from the shed when the explosions began, to put on a smoke-helmet and go back again

to wet what sparks he might find. Other firemen, also wearing smoke-helmets, went with him.

"Fire's out, Chief!" the men reported a little later. "Not much damage done."

"That's good," remarked Mr. Martin.

"But there's nothing left of that box of fireworks," said another fireman, with a grin, as he took off his smoke-helmet.

"No, I didn't suppose there would be," replied the store owner. "I never should have left it there."

"Who set off the skyrockets, Daddy?" asked Ted.

"They set themselves off after the box caught fire," his father told him. "But how the box caught I don't know." And the cause of the little fire was never found out.

Really it was not much of a fire, for the only things that burned were the fireworks and the box in which they had been stored. But there was a great deal of smoke, as Ted discovered when he and his father went into the store a little later. Some firemen and police officers also went in, but the crowd was kept out. Ted felt proud that he could get in ahead of the other boys. But then, of course, it was his father's store.

"Nothing at all burned up here," said the fire chief, looking around. "It didn't even scorch the back wall."

"That's because you and your men got here so quickly with the engines," remarked Mr. Martin. "I'm much obliged to you."

"There's a lot of smoke, though," said a policeman. "Must have come from that window into the shed. It was partly open."

"We'll open some windows and let the smoke out," said a fireman. "You'll have more damage by smoke than you will by fire or water, Mr. Martin."

"Well, smoke isn't any too good for groceries," said Ted's father. "About the only things I know of that are made better by smoke are hams and herring. However, this might have been much worse. Who turned in the alarm?"

"Mr. Blake," said the chief, naming a man Mr. Martin knew. "He was passing and saw smoke coming from the shed door. Then he telephoned to fire headquarters."

"I must thank him," said Mr. Martin. "If the fire hadn't been discovered in time, my whole store might have burned. I'll just let my wife know the danger is past," he

added, going to the telephone in the store office near the big safe.

Mrs. Martin soon heard the good news that what little fire there had been was put out. There was nothing more to be done, and a policeman said he would remain on guard in the store while the windows and doors were kept open to let the smoke blow out during the night.

Then Ted and his father walked back home. The engines had gone back to their quarters, the dogs had stopped barking, and the crowd had vanished, for there was nothing more to be seen.

"Oh, Mother! It was just like Fourth of July!" cried Teddy as he entered the house. "Skyrockets, an' Roman candles an' everything!"

"I wish I'd been there!" exclaimed Janet. "Didn't the store burn at all, Daddy?"

"No, only the box of fireworks in the shed."

"But there will be some loss, won't there?" asked Mrs. Martin.

"Well, yes, some," her husband answered. "A few things will have to be thrown away, because food does not taste good after it has been smoked, and some other things may be

blackened. But the insurance company will pay me. And now, Curlytops, off to bed with you!" he cried. "It's getting late. Trouble is in Dreamland long ago, I'm sure."

"Yes, I tucked him in," said his mother. And when Ted and Janet had gone up to bed their mother sighed a little and said: "My, but this has been an exciting day!"

"You didn't find your diamond locket, I suppose?" asked Mr. Martin.

"No. And I'm afraid I never shall," answered his wife. "I shouldn't have allowed Janet to take it, but she begged so hard and they were having such fun playing house that I gave in to her. I thought the necklace would be safe on the porch."

"Yes, you'd imagine it would," agreed her husband. "I rather think Trouble had a hand in the loss of your diamond," he went on. "He must have picked it up because it was bright and shiny, and then have dropped it."

"No, I think Trouble isn't to blame this time," replied Mrs. Martin. "He does mischief enough, but this time he seems to know what he is talking about. He had the locket in his hand, but gave it back to Janet. And

she isn't sure what happened to it after the auto crash."

"Well, it's gone, at any rate, and there's no use worrying about it," said Mr. Martin. "Now I must think what I am going to do to-morrow. I can't open the store until after the insurance people have figured out how much they will pay me for my loss."

"Will this spoil your plans?" asked his wife. "I mean can you get off to Mount Major to start the store for the lumber camp?"

"Yes, I think so," answered the father of the Curlytops. "In fact I think this little fire will make it easier. I can't do any business here because my store will be closed until the loss is settled. And while I'm waiting for that I can go to Mount Major. I'll leave somebody in charge. How would you like to go along?" he asked.

"You mean all of us?" she questioned. "I couldn't very well go and leave the children here."

"Yes, I mean for all of us to go," was the reply. "I shall have to remain several weeks to get the lumber-camp store well started, and as this is practically the begin-

ning of the summer vacation in the school the children can just as well go as not."

"Where could we stay in the woods?" asked Mrs. Martin.

"There is a bungalow there—a very good one, I believe. I intended to live in it myself, but there is room for us all."

"The children will be delighted!" exclaimed Mrs. Martin. "To think of spending a summer in the woods!"

"Yes, the Curlytops will like the woods all right, I think," chuckled Mr. Martin. "And so will Trouble. We'll tell them about it in the morning."

Mr. Martin made an early trip to his store, to look over the damage by daylight. When he came back the Curlytops and Trouble were having their breakfasts.

"Is store all burned?" asked Trouble, pausing in his eating of oatmeal and milk.

"Oh, no, not quite all burned," laughed his father. "Why didn't you come down with your fire engine and help put the blaze out, Trouble?" he asked, teasingly.

"Mother—she now—she wouldn't let me," stammered the little fellow, getting ready to take a spoonful of oatmeal and milk. But somehow or other, he missed

his aim and part of the spoon's contents spilled on the table.

"Oh, look what you did!" cried Janet. "Look, Trouble!"

Trouble looked. He often soiled the table cloth and more than once he had been scolded for it, as his mother did not want him to fall into careless table manners.

"Now you did it!" cried Janet.

"Yep—yep—I did spill some *milk,*" admitted Trouble. "But—but you—you—now—you now—*lost mother's diamond locket!*" accused the little fellow.

"Never mind, Trouble! It couldn't be helped," said his father, as he took up the spilled milk.

"Oh, dear!" sighed Janet. "I'm so sorry, Mother, and I——"

"Never mind, my dear!" soothed Mrs. Martin. "We may find the locket yet."

But there were tears in the little girl's eyes, and Ted, too, felt a bit sad, for he thought that in moving about the boxes in the playhouse he might have knocked the locket down into some hole or crack where it could never be found.

"Don't worry about it," went on Mrs.

Martin. "Tell them the good news, Daddy, and cheer them up."

"What good news?" asked Ted.

"Is it about the fire?" asked Janet. "Wasn't it your place after all, Daddy?"

"Oh, there was a fire in my store all right," her father told her. "But it didn't really amount to much. However, the fire will not prevent my going to the Mount Major lumber camp, to start a supply store there for the men. And your mother and I have decided that we shall all go there and spend the summer vacation."

"Up to Mount Major?" cried Ted.

"Yes," his father said.

"In the woods?" exclaimed Janet, clapping her hands.

"Yes."

"Oh, what fun!" cried the Curlytops together, and Trouble, finishing his oatmeal, added:

"I likes to have fun!"

"We know that!" chuckled Ted.

And then followed such a lot of talk and so much laughter over the happy days to come that it is a wonder anyone ate any breakfast. And when the meal was nearly over there came a ring at the door, and Mr.

Jenk, the neighbor in the adjoining house, came in.

"Sorry to disturb you, Mr. Martin," said Mr. Jenk, "especially after your fire trouble."

"You're not disturbing us," said Mr. Martin pleasantly. "As for the fire, it didn't amount to as much as we feared. It was really only some fireworks."

"What I came over for," said Mr. Jenk, as he took his seat in a chair, "is to ask you if you have seen Jim this morning."

"Your tame crow?" asked Mr. Martin.

"Yes, Jim," went on Mr. Jenk. "My crow is missing, and I wouldn't lose him for a good deal. He's worth more than a hundred dollars and he gets cuter and smarter every day."

"Oh, is Jim gone?" exclaimed Ted "How did it happen?"

"That's what I don't know," answered Mr. Jenk. "He came in last night, as he always does, just before dark, and he went to sleep on his perch in the kitchen. But this morning he was gone. I know he used to come over here quite often, and I thought perhaps some of you might have seen him."

"We saw him yesterday afternoon," re-

plied Janet, and Ted nodded his head at this. "But we haven't seen him this morning."

"It's too bad," said Mr. Jenk, as he arose to leave. "I'd give a good deal to get my crow back. That theater man said he was one of the best trick birds he'd ever seen."

"He looked so funny when he stood on one leg and stuck the other out," added Janet.

"Yes, that was one of the first tricks I taught him," remarked Mr. Jenk.

"Yes, and he could make a noise like popping corks as real as anything!" said Teddy. "Come on, Janet," he added. "Let's go look for Jim. Maybe he's out in a tree."

As the children were about to leave the table, Mrs. Martin suddenly raised her hand for silence and called:

"Hark!"

Out in the kitchen sounded a loud "pop!"

"There's Jim now!" cried Ted, making a rush for the kitchen.

CHAPTER IV

TROUBLE'S SQUIRREL

TED MARTIN was not alone in his rush for the kitchen. He was followed by Janet and Trouble. Only Trouble did not get very far. For Skyrocket, the dog, who had been asleep in a corner, roused up suddenly at the sound of Ted's hurrying steps and managed to get in Trouble's way.

The result was that Trouble fell down. But, as he was a fat, chubby little chap, a fall did not harm him much. Only this time he stepped on Skyrocket's paw and the dog howled.

"My! More excitement!" laughed Mother Martin, as she followed Ted and Janet, first stopping to pick up Trouble and make sure he wasn't hurt. Mr. Martin and Neighbor Jenk followed more slowly.

"Where's Jim?" asked Ted of Lucy, the colored cook.

"Whar am who, chile?" asked Lucy.

"Where is Jim, Mr. Jenk's tame crow?" repeated Ted.

"We heard him out here, making a noise like pulling a cork from a bottle," added Janet. "Where did he go, Lucy?"

"Yo' mean a Jim crow was out heah makin' believe pull corks from a bottle?" asked the cook.

"Yes, it's one of his tricks," explained Mr. Jenk, though as he looked around the kitchen and saw no glistening black bird he began to wonder.

"Dat wasn't no crow pullin' a cork!" said Lucy, with a laugh that shook her fat sides.

"What was it then?" asked Mr. Martin.

"It was me! Ah done pulled a cork from de vinegah bottle," explained Lucy, and she showed them a bottle of vinegar she had just opened. Pulling the cork had caused a popping sound like that made by Jim the pet crow.

"Then he isn't here," said Mr. Jenk.

"No, sah. Ah ain't seen no crow," answered Lucy. "Dat bird suah am too smart," she went on. "He done hab de evil eye, he suah hab!"

"You mustn't say such things, Lucy,"

chided Mrs. Martin. "There isn't any such thing as an evil eye."

"Well, mebby dey ain't," admitted the cook. "But ef dey *was* a evil eye, dat Jim crow suah would hab it!"

"He's smart, all right," admitted Mr. Jenk. "Well, as long as my crow isn't here I may as well go back and look elsewhere for him. I hope I find him."

"So do we," echoed Ted.

"If you see anything of him, either catch him or let me know," begged the owner of Jim. "I'll give a reward of five dollars for him."

"I'd like to earn all that money," sighed Ted, for he had visions of what he could buy with five dollars. "But we're going away to Mount Major, to live in a lumber camp, and I guess we won't see Jim up there, Mr. Jenk."

"No, I don't suppose you will," admitted the neighbor, with a sigh. "But if you do see him let me know. Jim was a valuable crow! So you are going to Mount Major, are you?"

"Yes," replied the Curlytops' father, and told about the proposed trip.

Mr. Jenk went back home, and then the

Curlytops talked of their coming outing in the woods. Trouble found the pail and shovel with which he had been playing the day before and started for the garden.

"Where are you going?" asked his mother.

"I go dig more worms," he answered. "I got to have a lot of worms to fish with."

"Where are you going fishing?" Ted wanted to know.

"I fish in lake up by daddy's lumber camp," was the reply. "Daddy, he say there's lake."

"Yes, there is," said Mrs. Martin, in answer to looks from Ted and Janet. "There is also a river, I believe, down which logs are floated. But you'll see all this when we go to Mount Major."

"When are we going?" asked Ted.

"And how?" Janet wanted to know. "In the train?"

"I think we are going by auto the end of this week," answered Mrs. Martin, for after the search for the crow Mr. Martin had gone back to his store to meet the fire insurance agents.

"Oh, what fun we'll have!" joyously cried Janet.

"The best times we ever knew!" agreed her Curlytop brother.

"Let's go look for Mr. Jenk's crow," proposed Janet, and out they ran to the fields and a little patch of woods not far from their home.

"Where you go?" asked Trouble, as he looked up from his digging to watch his brother and sister. "I come," he added, not bothering to put in all the words.

"We're going to look for Jim," said Ted.

"I find him!" declared Trouble, as if it were easy to locate a missing crow. Though Jim was lame in his legs, and could only hobble about, his wings were as strong as ever and he could fly many miles.

"Yes, you'll find him—not!" laughed Ted. "You'll find him as we found mother's missing diamond."

"Oh, don't talk about that!" pleaded Janet, who felt very sad over the lost locket.

The search for the tame crow was no more successful than had been the one for the diamond locket. The children looked through the fields and in the little patch of woods, calling:

"Jim! Jim! Jim!"

But there came no "Caw! Caw!" in an-

swer, nor did the Curlytops hear the sound of popping corks.

"It's too bad about Mr. Jenk's crow," said Ted, after they had tramped about for some time with no success.

"Maybe he flew off to go in some show," suggested Janet, with a laugh. "He likes to do his tricks and have us watch him."

"There's no telling where he is," decided Ted. "I guess we may as well go back home. If we're going to camp out in the woods I have lots of things I want to take along."

"So have I," decided Janet. "I don't know which of my dolls to take."

"Take 'em all," suggested Ted.

"Theodore Martin! As if I could take a *dozen* dolls!" cried Janet.

"A dozen? Have you a dozen dolls?" asked her brother, in surprise.

"Course I have! And I know some girls that have 'most two dozen," said Janet.

"Whew!" whistled Ted. "Two dozen dolls! That's terrible!"

"'Tisn't any such thing!" declared Janet. "How many marbles have you, Ted Martin?"

"Oh, I guess maybe I have a hundred. But marbles are different, and——"

"How many *tops* have you, Ted Martin?"

"Well, maybe, now, about ten or eleven. But——"

"How many *boats* have you, Ted Martin?"

"Oh, about nine, but——"

"Well, don't talk to me about a dozen *dolls!*" cried Janet. "You boys are just as bad as we girls that way."

"Maybe we are," replied Ted, with a laugh. "Hello, where's Trouble?" he asked suddenly, looking around and not seeing his small brother.

"He was here a moment ago," said Janet, and her voice grew a little anxious.

"I know he was," said Ted. "But he isn't here now. Oh, Trouble!" he called loudly.

There was no answer.

"Maybe he's lost," suggested Janet.

"He can't be lost very long or very far," Ted assured her. "For he was right here not more than two minutes ago and he couldn't go far in that time."

"Call again," suggested Janet, and Ted raised his voice in a loud shout.

"Trouble! William! Trouble!"

Thus Ted called, but as he and his sister listened there was no answer.

"He must have wandered off somewhere when we didn't notice," suggested Janet. "We'd better hurry back home and get mother and Skyrocket. Skyrocket can smell which way Trouble went and find him."

"Yes, I guess we'd better do that," agreed Ted. "I never saw such a boy as he is for doing things!"

Just as Ted and Janet were about to hurry home and tell their mother the news, they heard a noise in the underbrush at the edge of the woods. The figure of a boy was dimly seen, and Janet cried:

"There he is!"

But when the boy came out of the bushes it was not Trouble. It was Henry Simpson, a playmate of Trouble's, though somewhat older.

"Oh, Henry, have you seen Trouble?" asked Ted.

"Yes, I saw him," said Henry, who was not much of a talker. You had to ask a separate question for everything you wanted Henry to tell you.

"You saw Trouble! Where is he?" cried Janet.

"Over there," and Henry pointed to a little gully in the woods where, during the spring rains, a stream flowed.

"What's he doing there?" asked Janet, while Ted started on a run for the place pointed out by Henry.

"He's chasin' a squirrel," added the other boy.

"Chasing a squirrel?" cried Janet. "Why, he never can catch a squirrel, and he oughtn't to try. He might get hurt. Why didn't you tell him he couldn't catch a squirrel, Henry?"

"I did tell him," and Henry grinned.

"What did he say?" asked Janet, as she followed Ted across the path toward the gully.

"He told me to go home an' not bother him, 'cause he was goin' to catch a squirrel an' have the squirrel find the lost crow," said Henry. This was quite a long sentence for him, and having gotten it out he turned around and walked off.

"Where you going?" asked Janet.

"Home," was all Henry answered.

And home he went.

But Ted and Janet hurried on to the little gully, or valley, in the woods. There was no

water flowing in it now and the place was quite dry. As the Curlytops reached the edge of it, they heard, down below them, someone pushing through the dried bushes.

"Trouble! Trouble!" cried Ted. "Are you there?"

"Yes, I here," was the reply. "Don't scare my squirrel!"

"Your squirrel!" exclaimed Janet. "Have you caught one?"

"I get him pretty soon," Trouble called back. "I almost got him twice, but he skips!"

"Squirrels are great skippers," laughed Ted.

They went down a little farther into the gully and there saw Trouble. He was walking slowly along, holding out his hand in which he held a nut. And not far from him, skipping from limb to limb of a tree, was a large gray squirrel.

"Are you trying to catch that squirrel, Trouble?" asked Ted.

"No," was the answer. "I want feed him an' make him show me where Jim crow is."

"You'd better go down there and get Trouble," Janet advised her brother.

"I will," he said.

"And maybe you might see Jim," added the little Curlytop girl.

"I'll look," offered Ted. "Though if there was a crow here I guess he'd be cawing."

However, there was no sight of the glistening black bird, and Ted made his way down the side of the gully. Trouble was on the very bottom, where the stream ran whenever there was any water, but the course was now dry. And because he was down in the gully, Trouble had not heard his brother and sister calling to him.

"Come back, Trouble! Let the squirrel go!" called Ted.

"I give him this nut!" insisted the little fellow. "He is a good squirrel an'——"

But Trouble did not finish that sentence.

The next moment, to the surprise of Ted and Janet, their little brother fell down and vanished from sight.

CHAPTER V

OFF TO MOUNT MAJOR

"Did you see that, Ted? Did you see where Trouble went?" cried Janet.

"Yes, I saw him fall, but I don't know where he went," Ted answered. "I guess he's down in a hole."

"Oh, maybe there's water in it and he'll drown!" went on Janet.

"There isn't any water here now," said Ted.

And it was a good thing the gully had gone dry, for Trouble had fallen into a hole that was filled with deep water when the stream was rushing through the gully. But, as Ted remarked, it was now dry.

For a moment after his tumble Trouble uttered no sound. And then he yelled:

"Come an' get me! Come an' get me out, Ted!"

"YES, I HERE," WAS THE REPLY. "DON'T SCARE MY SQUIRREL!"
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"I'm coming!" answered the older boy. "Don't be afraid, Trouble! I'm coming!"

By the time Janet reached the edge of the leaf-filled hole into which Trouble had fallen, Teddy had pulled out his little brother. Trouble was not much hurt, being only bruised, but he was covered with leaves and dirt.

"There, there, William, you're all right," soothed Ted.

"Don't cry!" begged Janet. "We'll take you to the store and buy you a lollypop."

Trouble rubbed his tears away, but in doing so wiped a lot of dirt from his hands all over his face so that he was quite a sad looking sight. However, Janet cleaned him up as best she could with her handkerchief.

"Now you're as good as ever," laughed Ted, as he picked off the dead leaves clinging to his small brother. "What were you doing down there, anyhow?"

"I wanted to get squirrel an' have him show me where crow is," explained Trouble.

Of course he didn't get near the squirrel, and, even if he had given the big-tailed creature the nut, the squirrel would not have eaten it, as it was wormy and had no kernel in it.

"But maybe to-morrow I find another nut an' I give that to squirrel an' he find Jim crow," said Trouble, as he walked home with Ted and Janet.

"It's too early for this year's nuts," said Ted. "Anyhow, we have to pack up our things to go to Mount Major."

"Oh, yes, I go to woods!" laughed Trouble. "An' I take my fire engine an' squirt on fire."

They reached home and told their mother about the little adventure. She warned Trouble he mustn't do such a thing again as wandering off by himself.

"No'm, I won't!" Trouble promised.

"But if he doesn't do that he'll do something else just as troublesome," said Janet, with a sigh. And Trouble did.

These were busy days in the home of the Curlytops. Mr. Martin had much to do to get matters straightened out about his smoke-harmed store, and he had also to get ready to go to the lumber camp in the woods to start the supply store there. Mrs. Martin must pack the things that were to be taken for a long vacation stay—she must see to the clothing for herself and the three children. The food supplies Mr. Martin would

look after, as he had to ship up several cars of groceries to stock the lumber supply store.

Lucy, the colored cook, was to be taken along. Once, though, after they had talked over the joys of camping in the woods, Lucy came in where Mr. and Mrs. Martin were sitting, after the children had gone to bed, and said:

"Please, ma'am, Mrs. Martin, Ah doan t'ink Ah'd bettah go off to de woods wif yo' all."

"Why not, Lucy?" asked Mrs. Martin, in surprise. "I have been counting on you."

"Yais, ma'am," went on Lucy. "But, all de same, Mrs. Martin, Ah's kinder skairt ob dem jinkses."

"Jinkses! What do you mean?" asked Mr. Martin.

"Why, Teddy he done tole me dat de woods am filled an' runnin' ober wif jinkses. Dey's animiles wif curtain tassles on der ears. Ah doan t'ink Ah'd laik 'em much, Mrs. Martin, ma'am!"

"Nonsense!" laughed Mr. Martin. "Teddy must have been talking about the lynx, or bobcat. They do have tassels, or tufts, of

hair on their ears, but they won't hurt you, Lucy!"

"No? Won't dey, Mistah Martin?" she asked anxiously.

"No, indeed, Lucy. Ted shouldn't have spoken of the bobcats in the woods. I don't believe we'll see one. But if you should, Lucy, the lynx would run as soon as it saw you."

"Golly! He wouldn't done run any faster dan Ah would!" chuckled the cook. "All right. Den Ah guess Ah goes!"

This much settled, there were other matters to be looked after before the trip to Mount Major could be started. As Mr. Martin had thought, the settlement of his fire loss by the insurance company would take some time. During that time his store would be in charge of a trusted man whose name was Henderson, and he could thus well afford to go to the lumber camp.

The Curlytops and Trouble were so excited over the prospect of fun in the lumber camp that nothing they played around their home now, and no sports that they took part in with their playmates, seemed to satisfy them. They were always thinking of

what they would do at Mount Major, and planning picnics and excursions there.

"I'm going to set a trap and see if I can't catch a lynx," declared Ted.

"Well, don't scare Lucy any more, no matter what you do," begged his mother. "First I know, she'll leave and then we'll have no cook."

"I'll be careful," promised Ted.

Janet had packed her dolls, Teddy his toys, and Trouble had filled a box with odds and ends of things he wanted to take to the woods. But afterward Mrs. Martin went over all the children's boxes and took out a great many things without telling them about it.

"They'll never miss them," she said to her husband. "But if I let them take all they wanted there would be no room for anything else."

"Yes, they have queer ideas," he agreed. "I don't suppose you found your diamond locket?" he asked.

"No," his wife replied, with a sigh. "I have given it up. I don't say much about it, for I don't want Janet to feel too bad about losing it. As I should never have let her take it, it is as much my fault as hers."

The trip to Mount Major was to be made, as I have told you, in Mr. Martin's large automobile. In this would also be carried the baggage and some food and supplies that would last the party until the things sent by express had arrived from Cresco.

It was a long day's travel by automobile from Cresco to Mount Major, and so Mr. Martin planned to get an early morning start on the day that was set for the trip.

"We will have an early breakfast here," said Mr. Martin. "We will lunch on the road. And if we have luck we'll have supper in our bungalow in the woods."

"Oh, I just know we'll have the loveliest fun!" cried Janet.

"That's right!" agreed Ted.

"An' maybe I find Jim crow," said Trouble.

So far no trace had been found of the missing lame bird pet of Mr. Jenk. Jim seemed to have disappeared. Once or twice he had flown away, to be gone perhaps a day or so, but he had never remained away as long as this before, his owner declared.

The Curlytops and other children of the neighborhood had searched through the near-by woods and fields for Jim, but had

not heard his harsh cawing cry nor had they heard him "pull corks." And of course no one had seen him stand on one leg, with the other stuck stiffly out and his head, with his sharp, beady eyes, thrust to one side.

Jim was not to be found, and Mr. Jenk felt sorry to lose the crow. He even published a notice in the Cresco paper about Jim, offering now a reward of ten dollars for the return of his pet.

"If I find the crow I'll give you half the reward," promised Ted to his sister.

"And if I find him I'll give you half," she added. "If I get the five dollars I'll buy me a new doll carriage."

"And I'll get roller skates, a steam engine, a foot ball, some ice skates and a base-ball bat," decided Ted.

"My!" laughed his father, "you must think the five dollars are going to be rubber ones that will stretch out enough to buy a whole store full of toys."

"Well, I can get something, anyhow!" declared Ted.

"First find the crow" his father told him.

Teddy and Janet made up their minds they would spend all the remainder of the time before leaving for Mount Major look-

ing for Jim. This they did, but without result. Jim remained lost.

Then came the glad day on which they were to start. As much as possible had been packed into the automobile which was roomy. And then in piled Mr. and Mrs. Martin, taking Trouble on the front seat with them, while Ted, Janet and Lucy rode on the rear seat.

"I'll take care of you, Lucy, if any bobcats come after you," promised Teddy.

"Har! Har!" laughed fat Lucy. "Ah ain't skairt ob no bobcats no mo'. Yo' papa done told me 'bout 'em! Ah ain't skairt! Har! Har!"

Off they started, the Curlytops and Trouble waving their hands to their playmates who gathered to bid them good-bye and wish them a happy summer in the woods.

Mr. Martin drove around past his store, for he wanted to leave a last word with Mr. Henderson, who was in charge, and the children could see where carpenters were at work repairing the burned shed, for there had been some slight damage there, it was later discovered.

On through the town, out into the beau-

tiful country, rolled the automobile, with Ted and Janet now and then breaking out into short snatches of song to show how happy they were.

They stopped for lunch along a beautiful road that led through the woods, and after eating they walked around to "stretch their legs," as Mr. Martin called it.

"But we must not delay too long," said daddy, after a while. "We have a long way yet to go, and I don't want to arrive after dark. Better pile in, Curlytops!"

Once more the automobile was filled. Mr. Martin started the motor and let in the clutch. But something was wrong. The car moved a little way and then came to a stop with a jerk. The engine stalled.

"What's wrong?" asked Mrs. Martin.

"I don't know," her husband answered. "Maybe I didn't give her enough gas."

Once more he started off, but this time there was a sudden stop, followed by a crashing, splintering sound.

"Oh, we're pulling a tree down behind us!" cried Janet. "Stop, Daddy!"

CHAPTER VI

THE HAY WAGON

DADDY MARTIN put on the brakes very quickly and pushed on the pedal that threw out the clutch. With a squeak of the brake bands the car came to a stop. The cracking, splintering sound stopped, and the father of the Curlytops quickly leaped from the automobile to look behind and see what the trouble was.

"What is it?" asked Mrs. Martin.

"Anything broken?" Ted wanted to know.

"We seem to have broken off a small tree," replied Mr. Martin. "But the auto isn't damaged. We are chained fast to a tree."

"Chained fast to a tree!" cried Janet. "How can that be?"

"With one of the tire chains," went on Mr. Martin. "One end of a tire chain is fast around a tree and the other end of the

chain is tangled around one of the car springs. No wonder I couldn't move!"

"How did it happen?" asked Mrs. Martin.

"It couldn't have happened by accident," replied her husband. "That chain never got there by itself. I remember using the chains the other day, and, instead of putting them with the tools under the seat, I left them in the front of the car. Some one must have taken a chain and made us fast."

As Mr. Martin said this he looked sharply at Trouble, who had been sitting between him and his wife in the front seat.

"Did you do that Trouble?" asked his mother, shaking a finger at him.

"I guess maybe I did," admitted small William.

"Don't you *know* that you did it?" asked his father sternly.

"Yes, I did it," confessed Trouble.

"What for?" asked Janet.

"You might have caused an accident," added Ted.

"I—er—now—I now—jest did it so our auto wouldn't run away," explained Trouble.

"Oh, dear!" sighed Mrs. Martin. "What will you do next, Trouble?"

"I don't know," he said, and he probably meant it. For not even small William himself knew what next would pop into his mind.

"Well, it's lucky no great harm was done," said Mr. Martin. "If I had started off too suddenly I might have broken a tire chain. Then when we needed it to use on a wet and slippery pavement, William, we wouldn't have had it. I might skid and break a wheel."

"Yes, ma'am—I mean yes, sir, I—I'm sorry," said Trouble.

By asking Trouble questions they learned how it had happened. When they got out to "stretch their legs," as Mr. Martin called it, William alighted with the others. Then, when no one saw him, he took one of the tire chains from the front of the car. He tangled one end of the chain around the rear spring, and the other end of the chain he wound around the small tree.

Consequently, when Mr. Martin started his machine he pulled over and broke off the small tree, this causing the cracking, splintering sound.

"Well, it might have been a lot worse," said Mr. Martin, as he loosed the tire chain

and put it, with the second one, in the tool box under the seat.

"Better look to make sure there's nothing else loose that William can make trouble with," suggested Mrs. Martin, with a smile.

"If William makes any more trouble I'll send him back home to stay with Skyrocket," declared Mr. Martin, for the Curly-tops' dog had not been brought along on this trip, it being thought too much bother.

"I'll be good," promised the little fellow.

The automobile was being driven along the pleasant country roads toward Mount Major and the lumber camp where Mr. Martin was going to start the store for the lumber company that would get out the trees.

"Are they going to float the logs down the river?" asked Ted.

"Some of the logs will be floated that way," his father said. "Others will be sawed into boards right there in the woods."

"How can they saw them?" asked Janet.

"The men have set up a regular saw mill there in the forest," her father answered. "And, before I forget it, I want to warn you children—all of you—to keep away from the saw."

"Yes, it is very dangerous!" added Mrs. Martin.

"We'll keep away," promised Ted.

"And see that William keeps away, too," cautioned Mr. Martin.

It was well along in the afternoon when Mrs. Martin noticed that her husband was speeding the automobile each chance he got on good roads, and she also saw him often looking at the clock on the board in front of him.

"What's the matter?" she asked. "Are we late?"

"We aren't quite as far along on our trip as I'd like to be," he answered. "There were more hills than I counted on. But I think we'll get there before dark."

"I hope so," said his wife. "It won't be very pleasant settling in a strange bungalow after dark."

"I'll hurry as much as is safe," said Mr. Martin. He put on more speed, but as they were coming down a narrow road that led across a small white bridge there appeared, just ahead coming toward them around a turn in the highway, a big load of hay.

"You'll never pass that!" said Ted.

"Call to him to stop before he gets on the bridge," said Janet.

"It would be wise to do that," added Mrs. Martin. "If he doesn't stop, or you don't, Dick, you'll meet on the bridge, and there isn't room to pass anything as large as a load of hay."

"I guess you're right," admitted her husband. "I can't very well stop on this hill with the load I have. I say, you there!" he called to the driver of the hay wagon. "Pull up, will you? Wait until I pass you, please! Don't go on the bridge!"

Whether the rattle of the hay wagon drowned Mr. Martin's words, or whether the farmer was deaf was not known, but the load of dried grass kept on, and, in another moment, it and the automobile were close to the bridge.

"Oh, look out!" screamed Mrs. Martin.

"Whoa there!" yelled the farmer, seeing the danger. "What you trying to do?" he asked, rather angrily.

Mr. Martin did not try to answer then. He was putting on both foot and hand brakes with all his power. And luckily he stopped right in front of the horses of the hay wagon. There never would have been

room for the automobile to have passed the hay wagon on the bridge. Two automobiles, or an ordinary wagon and an automobile could have passed easily. But the hay stuck out so much on either side that it took up most of the roadway.

"Didn't you hear me call to you, asking you to keep off the bridge until I had crossed it?" asked Mr. Martin.

"Wa'al, no, I didn't," answered the farmer, and he smiled a little. Evidently he was not going to get angry after all.

"I did call to you," said Mr. Martin. "I would have stopped my car before reaching the bridge, but I couldn't, coming down hill as I was."

"No, I calculate 'twould be pretty middlin' hard," admitted the farmer. "I'm sorry I didn't hear you. Now if you'll wait a minute I'll try to back up."

"No, you'd better let me do that," suggested Mr. Martin. "I can back off easier than you can. I'll get out and take a look at things."

The bridge was rather narrow, and the road on either side leading to it was also narrow. It was not an easy matter for either the hay wagon or the automobile to back up.

But one or the other must do it, for they could not pass.

"I think I can back up all right," said Mr. Martin, after looking the ground over carefully.

"All right, neighbor. Sorry to put you to all this trouble," said the good-natured farmer.

"That's all right. We must give and take in this world if we are going to get along," said Mr. Martin pleasantly.

"Wait a minute!" exclaimed Mrs. Martin, as her husband was about to get back in the machine and back it up. "I want to get out before you try anything like that, Dick," she added. "And the children had better get out also."

"Maybe it would be better," her husband agreed. "I'll feel freer then to switch around."

"Are you going to stay in, Lucy?" asked Janet.

"Good lan' ob massy no, indeedy!" cried the black cook, and out she scrambled.

The Curlytops and the others stood in the road while Mr. Martin carefully backed his automobile off the bridge. Ted stood at the rear to tell his father which way to turn—

whether to the right or the left—to avoid going off the road into the ditches which were on either side. The farmer had to remain on his hay wagon to keep his horses quiet, for they seemed a bit skittish at the sound of the throbbing automobile.

At last Mr. Martin had backed far enough off the bridge for the hay wagon to keep on across it and pull out to one side so the automobile could go ahead.

This was done after a while and the road cleared.

"You folks comin' to live around here?" asked the farmer, as the Curlytops and others began to enter the automobile again.

"No, we're just going to stay for a while at Mount Major," answered Mr. Martin. "I'm going to open a store for the lumbermen who are soon to arrive."

"Oh, yes, I heard somethin' 'bout there going to be lumberin' off at Mount Major," the farmer said. "Wa'al, mebby I'll see you again. I live not far from Mount Major. Armstrong is my name—Silas Armstrong."

"I'm glad to meet you, Mr. Armstrong," greeted Mr. Martin, as he told his own name. "And I hope we see you again."

"Thanks," drawled Mr. Armstrong, as he drove off.

Once more the Curlytops were in the car. They crossed the bridge and were perhaps half a mile down the road when Mrs. Martin suddenly turned, looked back to where Ted and Janet were sitting with Lucy, and then Mrs. Martin cried:

"Where's William?"

Quickly Mr. Martin looked to where Trouble had been sitting on the other side of Mrs. Martin in the front seat. William was not there.

"Is he back there with you, Janet?" asked his mother.

"No, he isn't here."

"Then he's fallen out," cried the frantic mother. "Dick, stop the car! William has fallen out!"

CHAPTER VII

AT THE FARMHOUSE

Mr. Martin acted as quickly in bringing the automobile to a stop this time as he had done when Trouble had fastened it to a tree by the tire chains. Once the car was stopped the father of the Curlytops leaped out and looked back over the road.

"I don't see him anywhere," he said. "Are you sure he isn't in there?"

"No, he isn't here with us," answered Janet.

"Unless he's slipped in among the packages," added Ted. "I'll look."

"Ef de poor chile am down in amongst de t'ings he's suah to be smashed!" declared Lucy.

But Trouble was not there. Nor was he in front. Mr. Martin had been sure of this before he leaped from the car.

"Oh, where can he be?" cried Mrs. Martin.

"He was with us just before we met the hay wagon," said Mr. Martin. "Then we all got out to look and see how much room there was, and you all stayed out while I backed up."

"Did Trouble get back in with you?" asked the Curlytops' mother.

"No, he didn't," Janet answered.

"We thought he was in front with you," said Teddy.

"And we thought he was in the rear with you," added Mrs. Martin. "It wasn't until I looked back to see if he might be getting sleepy that I missed him. Oh, where is he?"

"We'll find him!" declared Mr. Martin. "He couldn't have fallen out, or we would have heard him yell."

"Then how did he get out?" asked Mrs. Martin anxiously.

"I think he didn't get in," her husband replied. "I mean, when all of you got back in after the hay wagon passed Trouble stayed out and I started off without him."

"But where can he be?" inquired Janet.

"Oh, he wandered off along the road to pick flowers as he often does," said Ted.

The automobile was turned around and started back over the road they had come.

Eager eyes looked everywhere for a sight of Trouble, but he was not seen. They looked carefully near the bridge, then went on a little farther. As Mr. Martin steered around a bend in the road, he saw the hay wagon again, just ahead of them.

"I have an idea!" he suddenly cried, as he put on speed. As he neared the big load of fodder, in front of which, hidden from sight, sat the driver. Mr. Martin called:

"I say there! Wait a minute! Have you seen a lost boy!"

He made his voice heard above the rattle of the hay wagon. From in front came a call:

"Whoa!"

The horses came to a stop.

"What's that?" asked Mr. Armstrong, looking around the front edge of the hay.

"My little son William is missing," said Mr. Martin. "Did you see anything of him along the road?"

Anxiously Mrs. Martin waited for the answer.

"No, I didn't see him!" said Mr. Armstrong.

Mrs. Martin seemed on the edge of tears when Ted gave a sudden shout.

"Maybe he's up on the load of hay where we can't see him!" he exclaimed.

"How could he get there?" asked Jan.

"And wouldn't he call to us?" asked Mrs. Martin doubtingly.

"He could easily climb up," explained Ted. "He could get on the back of the wagon, and there's a thing like a ladder to climb."

This was true enough. To keep the hay from slipping off the end of his wagon Mr. Armstrong had fastened there an upright, consisting of two pieces of wood joined by cross pieces. It was like a short ladder leading to the top of the load of hay.

"Trouble could easily climb that," insisted Ted. "I've seen him climb harder places than that."

"So have I," added Janet.

"But why doesn't he answer us?" asked Mrs. Martin.

Then Mr. Martin solved the puzzle.

"If he's up there maybe he's asleep," he said.

"I'll soon find out!" cried Ted.

A moment later he was climbing up the little ladder at the back of the load of hay.

When he reached the top of the pile of fodder Ted cried:

"Here he is!"

Trouble was peacefully slumbering in a little nest he had wiggled himself into on top of the sweet-smelling hay.

"He is like Little Boy Blue!" laughed Janet.

"Except that Boy Blue was under the haystack fast asleep, and Trouble is on top of the hay," said Mr. Martin.

"I'll slide him down. Catch him!" cried Ted to his father.

They could hear Trouble sleepily protesting at having been awakened. But he soon grew good-natured, and amid the laughter of the farmer, Janet, her mother and Lucy, Ted and his father got the small boy down off the load of hay.

"What did you ever go up there for?" asked his mother, as she picked wisps of hay out of his hair.

"Oh, jest for—now—for fun," slowly answered Trouble.

And that is how it had happened. He had strolled around when they were all out of the car, waiting for Mr. Martin to back it and get it out of the way of the hay. Then

Trouble had seen the little ladder leading to the top of the fodder. He had scrambled up on a wheel when no one was watching and climbed to the summit.

"It was awful nice up there," he said, "an' I had a nice sleep, I did."

"It's a wonder you weren't jiggled off!" exclaimed Janet.

"Oh, you should see the hole he was in!" laughed Ted. "He was like a little squirrel in a nest."

"I like to be a squirrel," declared Trouble. "An' if I was a squirrel now I would eat a nut for I am hungry."

"Bless your heart!" exclaimed his mother, with a laugh, "I suppose you are hungry. Well, it's some time until supper, but I guess I can find you something. Did you thank Mr. Armstrong for the hay ride?" she asked with a smile and nod at the farmer.

"Oh—er—now—thank you!" said Trouble politely.

"You're welcome, young man," chuckled the farmer. "The next time you want to ride with me let me know and I'll put up a lunch for you."

There was more laughter and then good-

byes were said. The load of hay continued on down the road, and Mr. Martin, making sure that Trouble was now in the car, turned the machine and started back over the road toward Mount Major.

But so much time had been lost, first because of the chaining of the car to the tree and then the hunt for Trouble, that it was now late afternoon.

"I don't see how we are going to make it," said Mr. Martin to his wife, as they drove along.

"You mean get to Mount Major before dark?" she asked.

"Yes. I don't want to take you into the woods with the children after dark—especially to a strange place."

"Oh, I don't mind much," she said. "Of course it will be quite a trouble, but we may get some fun out of it."

"It will be lots of fun!" exclaimed Janet, who overheard what her father and mother were saying.

"Like camping out," added Ted.

"Camping out is all right when you have your camp set up," returned Mr. Martin, with a laugh. "But it isn't much fun to make camp after dark in a strange place

with three children. So I think we had better stay over for the night."

"Where?" asked Ted. "Do you mean camp here in the woods?" and he motioned to the forest that was then on either side of the road.

"Oh, no, we won't stay here," his father answered. "We'll go on to the next town and stay at the hotel."

"We're not really dressed to stop at a fashionable hotel," objected Mrs. Martin.

"I guess the hotels around here aren't very fashionable," laughed her husband.

But, as it happened, they did not stay at a hotel. The automobile was driven along until it came out of the wooded road and was speeding along a highway that led past a pleasant farm, with its big white house and green shutters and barns and outhouses clustered near it.

Just as they were passing the house Mr. Martin looked at the motormeter, or thermometer, on the radiator of the car, and exclaimed:

"Something's wrong!"

"It is overheating," said Mrs. Martin. "Are you out of water?" For sometimes when there is not enough water in the radia-

tor of an automobile, what little there is boils and turns to steam, and this heat makes the red column of alcohol on the tube go nearly to the top. It was almost there now.

"I have plenty of water and oil," said Mr. Martin. "It must be something else."

He stopped the car and got out to raise the hood. Ted also got out, for he knew a little about cars and once or twice he had seen things that needed fixing almost as soon as had his father.

But this time it was Mr. Martin who saw what was wrong.

"The fan belt is broken," he said. "The fan stopped whirling and that let the water get very hot."

"Have you a new belt?" asked Ted.

"Yes, but it will take some little time to put it on."

"I'm hungry! I want a good supper!" suddenly cried Trouble.

"Dear me!" exclaimed his mother. "I'm afraid we haven't very much left to eat. I counted on being in the bungalow for supper."

Mr. Martin appeared to think for a moment. He looked toward the white farmhouse and seemed to make up his mind.

"Wait here," he said to his family. "As long as we are going to put up over night I'll see if they won't take us in here. It will take quite a while for me to put on the fan belt, as I'm not used to doing it. By that time it would be quite late, and it is several miles to the next town where there is a hotel."

"It would be lovely to stay here," said Mrs. Martin. "But of course we can't expect strangers to put themselves out for us."

"It will do no harm to ask, at any rate," said Mr. Martin.

He walked up to the side door of the farmhouse and soon those waiting in the automobile saw him talking to a pleasant-faced woman. Matters seemed to be all right, for Mr. Martin called:

"Come on! This lady has very kindly consented to let us stay here over night."

"Oh, that is good of you!" exclaimed Mrs. Martin, as she advanced with Ted, Janet and Trouble, while Lucy began getting out the bags.

"No trouble at all," was the answer of the farmer's wife. "We have plenty of room, and often accommodate auto parties.

My husband will soon be here. He is Jed Pitney."

Mrs. Pitney led the Curlytops and the others, except Mr. Martin and Lucy, into the sitting room. Mr. Martin was going to help Lucy bring in the baggage.

As he was doing this Mr. Pitney came in from the barn, where he had gone to oversee the milking of the cows by his hired man. The situation was explained to the farmer by Mr. Martin. Then Mr. Pitney, looking sharply at the automobile, said:

"You must have been carting hay." He pointed to some wisps of the dried fodder dangling from the rods that supported the top.

"Oh, that!" laughed Mr. Martin. "No, we weren't exactly carting hay, but we passed a load at a tight squeeze, and then my youngest boy climbed up on the hay wagon and went to sleep. It was Mr. Armstrong's hay."

"Silas Armstrong?" asked Mr. Pitney.

"That was his name, yes. He said he lived around here."

"I should say he did! Why, he's a neighbor of mine!" exclaimed Mr. Pitney. "Shake hands, Mr. Martin. I feel as if I

knew you since you've met my neighbor Si Armstrong on the road. Come right in and make yourself at home. Here, give me one of the satchels."

He helped bring in the baggage, and then, in his loud, jolly voice, he told his wife that Mr. Martin had met Silas Armstrong with a load of hay. This seemed to make them better acquainted.

Mrs. Martin was given a room for herself in which Janet and Trouble could sleep, and Ted and his father had another room.

When's supper going to be ready?" asked Trouble, in a loud voice after the sleeping arrangements had been made.

"Hush, dear!" whispered his mother.

"But I'm hungry! I want my supper!" he insisted.

"And you shall have it, my dear!" laughed Mrs. Pitney. "I know what little boys want," she went on. "Bread and jam."

"Oh, goodie!" cried Trouble, with shining eyes as he clapped his chubby hands.

It was a very good meal that was soon set before the Curlytops and the others of the party. Lucy insisted on being allowed to help wait on the table, and this she was permitted to do, much to her delight.

The meal and the rest afterward in comfortable chairs freshened the travelers after the day's trip. And after the car had been put in Mr. Pitney's garage—for the farmer had an automobile of his own—they all sat out on the porch enjoying the pleasant evening.

After a while Mrs. Pitney, noticing that the children were rather restless, said:

"Wouldn't you like to go up in the attic and play?"

"Oh, that would be lovely!" cried Janet.

"Are there any old Indian guns there?" asked Ted.

"None that shoot," laughed Mrs. Pitney. "There are a lot of old-fashioned things there, though, that you may play with," she added. "I'll light a lamp and hang it in a safe place where they can't knock it over, for it will be dark before long, and it's never very light in the attic, at best," she told Mrs. Martin. "Let them play in the attic."

CHAPTER VIII

FUN IN THE ATTIC

With whoops of delight that made the old farmhouse ring, the Curlytops and Trouble hurried after Mrs. Pitney. She smiled and laughed with them.

"I'm afraid they'll make you a lot of work," said Mrs. Martin.

"Oh, I love children," was the answer. "I have raised a family of them myself. They won't do any harm. There's nothing in the attic that can be damaged. And if the older ones will look after their little brother, there will be no trouble."

"That's his name," said Janet, with a laugh.

"Whose name?" asked Mrs. Pitney.

"His," and Janet pointed to William. "He'll get into trouble if there's any way at all."

"He chained the auto fast and went to sleep on the hay wagon," added Ted, as they climbed the attic stairs.

"Maybe—now—maybe I did," admitted Trouble, who always got his words a little mixed when he was excited. "But now I didn't—I—er—now—I didn't lost ma's diamond locket like you did, Jan!" he cried.

"Oh, dear!" sighed Janet, for that was an unhappy memory.

"Did your mother lose something on this trip?" asked Mrs. Pitney.

"Not on this trip," explained Ted. "It was before we started. My sister and I were playing house, and Janet borrowed mother's small diamond locket to dress up with. But there was an auto accident out in front and we ran to see that, and afterward we couldn't find the locket."

"It must have dropped down a crack. But we looked everywhere," said Janet. "Oh, I feel so bad about it."

"Never mind," consoled Mrs. Pitney. "Maybe it will be found some day."

But Janet did not believe it would.

"And Jim is lost, too," added Trouble.

"Who is Jim? Your dog?" asked the farmer's wife.

"No. He is a tame crow that does tricks, and he's worth more than a hundred dollars," explained Ted. "He can stand on one leg and make a pop like a cork coming from a bottle."

"It's too bad you lost a crow like that," said Mrs. Pitney, as she arranged the lamp in a safe place in the attic, where it would not be knocked over if the children raced about as they were sure to do. "One of our neighbors had a tame crow once," she went on. "It could say a few words, but I never heard it pull corks."

"Jim wasn't our crow," Janet hastened to explain. "He belongs to Mr. Jenk, the man who lives next door. But he'll give us ten dollars if we find Jim."

"Then I hope you'll find him soon," said Mrs. Pitney. "Now you may play with anything you find up here," she went on, "but I am going to ask you to put everything back just where you found it."

"Oh, we'll do that," promised Ted.

"And we'll put back anything that Trouble leaves out, for sometimes he forgets," said Janet.

"No, I put back t'ings myself!" insisted Trouble.

"All right," laughed Ted. "See that you do."

As Mrs. Pitney had said, there were many old-fashioned things in the attic for the children to have fun with. There were moulds for making candles, which were burned before we had kerosene lamps or electric lights. These candle moulds were a number of tin tubes fastened to a frame, and Mrs. Pitney remained up in the attic long enough to tell the children how candles used to be made.

"My grandmother used to make them," she said. "She would set this mould, which made a dozen candles at once, down in a tub of water to keep it cool. Then she would pour the melted tallow into each tin tube where, before that, some cotton wicks had been hung. The melted tallow flowed around the wick, which was hung just in the centre, by a little stick across the top of the mould. Then when the tallow was cold the candles could be lifted out."

"Did they make wax candles the same way?" asked Janet.

"Yes, only they used melted beeswax instead of tallow," said Mrs. Pitney. "Of course the wax candles were a little nicer

than those made of tallow, and they didn't smell up the room so. But I don't know that the wax ones gave any better light."

"It must have been fun to use candles," said Janet.

"Not as much fun as it sounds," answered the farmer's wife. "They didn't give half as good light as a kerosene lamp."

"We have lickerish lights at our house," said Trouble.

"Lickerish lights?" exclaimed Mrs. Pitney.

"He means electric lights," explained Janet. "Oh, what's that big wheel over there?" she asked, pointing to one in a corner of the attic.

"That's a spinning wheel," was the reply. "In the olden days my grandmother spun the woolen yarn that was woven into cloth or knit into socks."

"May we play with it?" asked Ted.

"Yes. It isn't all there," said Mrs. Pitney. "Only the big wheel is left, but you can turn it and have fun, I suppose."

"We'll play engine," decided Ted, as he helped Mrs. Pitney move the old-fashioned spinning wheel out into the middle of the attic.

Then Janet saw a smaller wheel somewhat like the larger.

"Was that for little girls to spin yarn on when their mothers spun on the big wheel?" she asked.

"No," was the answer. "The little wheel is for spinning flax, which is different from wool. Flax is a plant that grows. It has blue flowers. In the olden days our grandmothers took the stalks of the flax plant, wet them, pounded them, and pulled the fine fibers into threads. These very fine threads were then spun together by the spindle on the small flax wheel, and from the threads linen cloth was woven at the mill."

"If we could take the big spinning wheel and the flax wheel I could put them together and have a dandy engine!" said Ted, with sparkling eyes.

"You may take them," said Mrs. Pitney.

With Janet's help Ted set the two old-fashioned spinning wheels together. The larger one had a rim around it over an inch wide, and the smaller, or flax wheel, had two grooves around its rim.

"They used to put two belts of string on the small wheel," said Mrs. Pitney, "and then the string belts ran to two different

parts of the spindle," and she showed them about it. In this way one spindle went faster than the other, for they were of different sizes.

"My daddy—he has a fan belt on his auto —but it busted!" broke out Trouble.

"Yes, I heard about that," laughed Mrs. Pitney. "Well, now you may play with the spinning wheels," she told Teddy.

He found some string for a belt and ran it from the large wheel to the smaller. Then when Ted turned the large wheel with his hand the flax wheel also went around, one on one side of the attic and one on the other side.

"We'll play steamboat," decided Ted. "I'll be the engineer."

"I'll be the captain!" cried Janet.

"What I goin' to be?" Trouble wanted to know.

"You can be a passenger," said Ted. "You can ride."

"Don't want to wide! I wants to be a cap'n!" protested Trouble.

"Oh, it's lots of fun to be a passenger," soothed Janet. "Passengers can eat whenever they want to, but the captain and engineer have to wait until the whistle blows."

"You got suffin for me to eat?" asked Trouble.

"I'll get you cookies," offered Janet, for she felt sure Mrs. Pitney would give her some.

"Get some for us, too," suggested Ted to his sister, as he tried the string belt of his "engine" and found that it revolved the wheels in fine fashion.

"I'll get cookies for all of us," offered Janet.

"No! No!" cried Trouble. "Only pass-jars eat cookies."

"Well, we won't eat until the whistle blows," agreed Ted. But he made up his mind that he would himself blow a make-believe whistle as soon as Janet came back with the cookies.

The little Curlytop girl had no trouble in getting Mrs. Pitney to give her some cookies, and with these Janet went back to the attic. Ted had placed two chairs in the middle of the attic floor between the two old-fashioned spinning wheels. One of the chairs was a "cabin" for Passenger Trouble. The other was the pilot house where Janet stood to steer the boat.

"All aboard!" cried Engineer Teddy, as

he stood with one hand on the spokes of the big wheel, ready to turn it. Ted soon found that if he turned the big wheel, the small flax wheel would spin much faster than the one he turned. This was because of the difference in size. If Ted had turned the flax wheel by hand the larger wheel would have moved more slowly.

"All aboard!" cried Teddy again.

"You mustn't say that," objected Janet. "That's for the captain to say."

"All right—say it," agreed Teddy.

"All a-board!" yelled Janet.

"You don't say it as good as I do, but I guess it will be good enough," said Ted. "Did you hear it, Trouble?" he asked.

"Yep. I heard her," was the answer.

"Then why don't you get on board—in your cabin?" Ted wanted to know.

"Got to have cookie first so I can eat," said William. "Passjars eats all time!" And not until Janet gave him a cookie would he get on the make-believe steamboat.

Teddy made noises like steam puffing out. He turned slowly at first the big wheel, and the one on the flax spinner began to go around and around. Faster and faster it

went, while Janet turned an old peck measure she had found for the steering wheel.

Trouble did not pay much attention to anything except eating his cookie. He sat in the chair, which was his "cabin," picking up even the crumbs that fell. He seemed to be very hungry.

"Toot! Toot!" suddenly called Ted.

"Dis for me to get off?" asked William.

"No, that's the whistle for me and Janet to eat our cookies," Teddy answered. "Don't you s'pose we get hungry same as you?"

"All right," calmly agreed Trouble. "I eat again, too," and he pulled a second cookie from his pocket. "I eat when whistle blows," he announced.

"Don't bother him—let him eat when he wants to," whispered Janet to Ted.

After a while Trouble became tired of sitting in a chair, even if he could eat cookies whenever he wished, and he decided he did not want to play steamboat any more. Teddy wouldn't let him spin either of the wheels for fear he might break them.

But the Curlytops played together, and finally Janet got Ted to let her be "engineer."

"For," she said, "if women can vote, and I'm going to when I grow up, they can be engineers on a steamboat."

"Not real they can't!" declared Ted.

"Well, they can make believe, so there!"

"Maybe make believe," Ted conceded, and he let Janet take his place while he took hers.

For a time they forgot about Trouble, so interested were they in watching the spinning wheels revolve, one turning the other. Then, all at once, through the attic resounded a jingle of bells.

"Santa Claus! Santa Claus!" cried a voice they knew to be that of Trouble. "I found Santa Claus bells!"

He came staggering out from a dark corner of the attic with a leather strap of sleigh bells dragging after him.

"Where did you get them?" asked Janet.

"Back under the roof," answered Trouble. "Aren't they Santa Claus bells?"

"They sound like them, anyhow," admitted Ted, for the bells gave a merry jingle.

But afterward Mrs. Pitney said the bells were those her husband's father used when he went sleighriding in the winter. The

bells were strapped around the horse and jingled when he trotted over the white snow, pulling the cutter after him.

It was all right for Trouble to believe they were the bells of Santa Claus, and really they sounded just like Christmas chimes.

Trouble played with the bells awhile, and then wandered off to look for something else. Janet, too, tired of the spinning wheels, though Ted did not, and Janet wandered into another corner of the attic.

It was not until Ted thought of something new to play with the big and little wheels that he looked for his sister.

"Janet! Janet!" he called. "Where are you?" The attic was cut up by many gables and all of it could not be seen from any one point. "Where are you, Jan?" cried Ted.

A banging sound answered him and then the voice of his sister cried:

"Oh, I'm locked in! I'm locked in! Help me out, Ted!"

CHAPTER IX

DOWN THE HILL

TEDDY, at first, did not know whether his sister Janet was playing a joke on him or not. The Curlytops often did play jokes, for they were just like you children. And more than once Janet had fooled Ted in this way. So, thinking for a moment that it was a joke, Ted answered and said:

"Oh, come on, Jan! Quit your fooling! I know a new game to play with the spinning wheels."

"I play wif you!" offered Trouble, coming from a dark corner of the attic, where he had become covered with cobwebs.

And then Jan broke out again in a wailing cry:

"Teddy! Teddy! I can't get out! I'm locked in!"

This time Ted knew it was no joke. Jan's voice showed that she was frightened and was crying.

The Curlytop boy looked all around the

attic. It had in it no closet where Janet might have gone in and closed the door after her, thus locking herself in. And if there was no closet where could she be? That is what Ted wanted to know.

Again came that wailing cry from Janet.

"Teddy! Teddy! Get me out!"

The Curlytop boy was very much puzzled and not a little frightened. Only a little while before Janet had been close beside him playing with the spinning wheels. Then, it seemed but a minute, Ted turned his back to make up some new game, and Janet had disappeared. Now she was locked in. But where?

"Janet! Janet! Where is you?" called Trouble.

That is what Ted should have asked. For right away came the answer.

"I'm in this big trunk, Teddy. The lid fell down and I can't push it up and I can't get out."

"Oh! In a trunk!" yelled Ted. Now he understood. And this was why Janet's voice sounded so muffled and far away. It came from inside a big trunk, of which there were three or four in the attic. It was as if she had been speaking from down in the cellar.

Teddy did not stop to ask how Janet had gotten inside the trunk. There was time enough for that after he had gotten her out —if he could. He sprang away from the spinning wheels and hurried over to the big old-fashioned trunks.

"Are you in this one, Jan?" he asked, as he started to raise the lid of one.

"No, I'm in here," came the answer.

Teddy sprang to the next trunk. Just as he was tugging on the lid, which seemed tightly fastened, Mrs. Martin came up the stairs.

Mrs. Martin saw what Teddy was about to do and she called to him:

"Teddy! Teddy! Don't open that trunk. Mrs. Pitney won't like it if you open her trunks. She was kind enough to let you play in the attic, but you mustn't open trunks!"

"But I *got* to, Mother!" exclaimed Teddy.

"Why do you have to?"

" 'Cause Janet's inside!"

"Janet inside that trunk?" cried Mrs. Martin. "What sort of game is that you are playing? You shouldn't have shut Janet up in a trunk."

"I didn't, Mother!" Teddy answered. "She got in herself and——"

But this delay was too much for Janet. She could hear the talk between her mother and Teddy. She could also hear Trouble shuffling around the attic floor. And Janet called:

"Oh, let me out! Let me out! I'm smothering!"

Mrs. Martin did not stop to ask any more questions. She fairly leaped across the floor and, catching hold of the trunk cover, tried to lift it up. But it would not come.

"It's caught!" explained Teddy. "That's why Jan couldn't get it up."

For a fearful moment or two Mrs. Martin feared that the trunk had locked with a spring catch. And she was alarmed lest there be no key to fit it, or that the key could not be found. In that case they would have to chop the trunk open to get Janet out.

But when Mrs. Martin looked at the lock of the trunk she saw that it was merely caught, and not fastened with a spring catch. In an instant she pulled the piece of brass forward and then, with Ted's help, she raised the lid of the trunk.

There was Janet, all crumpled up, lying

on a pile of old-fashioned dresses. The little Curlytop girl's face was very red, and it was dirty where she had cried and then rubbed her hands over her cheeks, her hands being soiled with dust from the old spinning wheels.

"Oh, Janet! Why did you hide in the trunk?" asked Mrs. Martin, helping her out. "You might have smothered in there!"

"I—I 'most did," sobbed Janet.

"Did you put her in there, Teddy?" asked his mother.

"Oh, no," he answered.

"I got in myself," Janet hastened to say. "I opened the trunk to look at some of the dresses, for Mrs. Pitney said we might. And I leaned over to see those on the bottom, and I fell in. I slipped all the way in and then the lid fell down and I couldn't get it up."

"That was too bad," said Mrs. Martin kindly. "It's lucky some one was up here with you or you might have been in the trunk a long time before you were let out. Old trunks like this sometimes fasten with a spring catch that is hard to open."

"I'll close this so Trouble won't get in," said Ted as he lowered the lid.

"I no hide in any trunks," the little fellow announced. "I got better place as that. Come see," he added, tugging at his mother's hand to lead her into the corner where he had been rummaging.

"No, I don't believe I want to go there. I'd get covered with cobwebs like you!" laughed Mrs. Martin. "But come, children. It's time you were in bed. Put things back where you found them and we'll go downstairs."

The spinning wheels were set back against the beams under the sloping roof of the old-fashioned attic. Trouble wanted to take the string of sleigh bells down to bed with him, but this could not be allowed. Janet gave one last look at the trunk which had been her prison for a short time and went with her mother and Ted.

"Did you have fun?" asked Mrs. Pitney, as they entered the sitting room.

"Yes, they had fun and a sort of adventure," answered Mrs. Martin, as she told about the trunk.

"Dear me! That might have been a sad accident," said the farmer's wife. "I never thought of your tumbling into any of those old trunks or I would have told you children

not to open them. Not that you could do any harm," she added, "for the dresses are so old-fashioned that no one would think of wearing them, unless at some Hallowe'en party. But I'm glad you got safely out, Janet."

"So'm I," agreed the little girl.

Soon after this the Curlytops were in bed. There was no need of any specially early start in the morning, Mr. Martin said, as they were not many miles from Mount Major, where they were to stay in the woods for several weeks.

"We can easily get to the camp bungalow by noon, if we start from here at nine o'clock," said Mr. Martin to his wife that night. "We will let the children sleep as long as they wish."

The night passed quietly, except that Trouble walked in his sleep, an occasional happening, and when his mother asked him what he wanted he answered:

"I get sleigh bells for Santa Claus."

He was thinking of his play up in the attic.

After a good breakfast the automobile was brought around to the door and once more the Curlytops prepared to travel on.

Many thanks were expressed to Mr. and Mrs. Pitney for their kindness in keeping the family over night.

"And when you get settled in your wood camp drive over and see us some time," invited the farmer's wife.

"I will," promised Mrs. Martin. "And you must come and see us."

"We will if I ever get any time away from the farm," laughed Mr. Pitney.

Off started the automobile with the Curlytops and the others. In a few hours they would be in the woods and then, thought Ted, Janet and Trouble, the real fun would begin. For they had been counting on having many good times in camp.

The roads, now, were not as good as they had been at first, becoming rather rough after leaving the Pitney farm. But Mr. Martin was a good driver and sent the car along at a good pace. He had been over the road some time before, and thought he knew the way. But once, coming to a place where two roads forked, he stopped as if puzzled.

"What's the matter?" asked his wife. "Don't you know which way to go?"

"Not exactly," he answered.

"Why don't you look at the road book?" suggested Ted.

"Here it is," offered Jan, for this auto guide was always carried in the car, and now she took it from one of the side pockets.

Mr. Martin turned the pages and looked at the maps, but he shook his head.

"This doesn't help any," he remarked. "This road doesn't seem to be down on the map."

"Do you think we came the wrong way?" Mrs. Martin wanted to know.

"Are we lost?" asked Janet.

"Oh, no," her father said, with a laugh. "But I want to take the shortest road to our place. We have been delayed enough. I was to meet some of the lumbermen there at noon, and if I'm not on hand they may go away and not come back until to-morrow. If there was only a sign-board or some one to ask."

But there was no sign and not a house was in sight. The nearest dwelling was about a mile back. Of course Mr. Martin could have turned and gone back there to ask which road to take, but he did not want to do this if he could avoid it.

"I wish some one would come along," he remarked.

And then, as if in answer to his wish, the sound of wheels and of a horse trotting, was heard down one of the roads.

"Some one is coming," announced Janet.

A moment later a farmer riding in a one-horse wagon came driving along.

"Which way to Mount Major, if you please?" asked Mr. Martin.

"Who-a-ah!" drawled the farmer slowly, as he pulled his horse to a stop. "Mount Major?" he went on. "Wa'al, you kin take either road," he said.

"Which one is the best?" Mr. Martin wanted to know.

The farmer seemed to be considering this for a moment.

"Both of 'em's prutty wuss!" he replied. "They's both bad enough, though not so much now's wet weather."

"Well, if both roads are bad," said Mr. Martin, with a smile at the farmer's odd talk and ways, "which road is the shorter?"

This appeared to be another puzzle. He scratched his head and finally answered:

"Wa'al, ef anythin' the one I jest come

over's a leetle mite shorter, an' 'tain't so much at that."

"Even a little difference will save us some time," said Mr. Martin. "I'm much obliged to you."

"Don't mention it! G'lang!" the farmer called to his horse, and he pulled to one side to get around the automobile which had stopped in the fork of the road.

"We'll take the right hand road," said Mr. Martin.

"I hope, later on, it won't turn out that we should have taken the left," said Mrs. Martin.

"Why, do you think something might happen?" asked Janet.

"Maybe we'll get lost and have to stay in the woods all night!" remarked Teddy. And he said it as though he would rather like such a thing to happen.

"Oh, no, I don't believe we'll have any trouble," said Mr. Martin. "I could have gone around by Parkersburg, and we would have had good roads all the way. But it was thirty miles farther and I thought we would save time this way. Well, we'll see what happens."

At first the road the farmer had told them

to take was fairly good, though there were stretches of sand where they could not go fast. Then they struck a patch of woods through which the road wound in and out like some great snake. The trees met in arches overhead.

"This is a very narrow road," remarked Mr. Martin, when they had traveled it for a mile or so. "I hope we don't meet any other autos or wagons. We'd have hard work to pass them."

But, so far, they had met and passed no other vehicles. Soon, however, the road, instead of being on the level, began to slope downhill, and it was rather a steep hill.

"Guess I'd better put on brakes here," said Mr. Martin.

He began to do this, but he had no sooner started down the hill than he found the brakes were not holding well. The automobile rolled along too fast.

"Still there may be no danger if we don't meet another car or wagon," thought Mr. Martin.

However, danger was ahead. A moment later Janet cried and pointed to a wagon going down the hill in front of them. It was a wagon piled to the top with bean

poles, and as the road was narrow and the wagon was wide there was hardly room for Mr. Martin to pass. And yet, tug as he did at the brakes, he could not stop the car.

"Pull over! Pull to one side and I'll go past you!" he called to the driver of the wagon.

"I can't!" was the answer. "There isn't room. Hold your auto back until I can get to a wider place!"

Again Mr. Martin pulled at the brake, but still the car rolled on.

"Oh, we're going to bunk!" murmured Janet.

"Good land ob massy!" cried Lucy, as she clutched Trouble to her. "Oh, mah gracious goodness!"

CHAPTER X

IN THE WOODS

Mr. Martin heard the murmurs of those in the automobile with him, and he knew that they might become much frightened.

Truly there was danger of a collision with the load of poles, as there was not room to pass on the narrow road. And, so far, he had not been able to stop his car. But it was going slowly, for, though the brakes did not hold it completely, they held it somewhat.

"If we bump we won't bump very hard," said Ted to his sister.

Meanwhile the man driving the load of poles which he had cut in the woods, was doing his best to find some place along the narrow road where he could pull to one side. The Curlytops were near enough now to see that one of the rear wheels of the wagon was sliding along in an iron "shoe."

This is what is often used in the country, and on heavy lumber or stone wagons, to keep them from going downhill too fast. The "shoe," as it is called, is made so that the wheel fits in it. The front of the shoe is fastened by a chain to the body of the wagon, and thus one wheel is dragged along the ground, acting as a brake. It is just the same as when you may be coasting along on one roller skate, you drag the other foot to act as a brake.

Nearer and nearer the automobile of the Curlytops came to the wagon load of poles. And just when it seemed as if they must "bunk," as Janet called it, though perhaps the "bunk" would not be very hard—just then the driver, who was walking beside his horse, with the reins in his hand, came to a wider place in the road.

"I'll turn in here and you can pass me!" he called.

"All right—thank you!" shouted Mr. Martin.

Carefully he guided the automobile past the load of poles. There was just about room enough to pass, and not much more. Soon after that the hill ended and they were on level ground again.

"Mah good land ob goodness, Ah's glad dat's ended!" sighed Lucy.

"I guess we're all glad," said Mrs. Martin. "You must have your brakes looked after, Dick!"

"I will," he said. "I thought they were all right. Some sand must have gotten in them from the roads. But now we're all right."

They were driving along a pleasant road through the woods. All danger seemed to be over, and Mr. Martin said he wished he had taken the other way instead of the one the farmer had told about as being the "least mite shorter."

"Sometimes the longest way is the best," said Mr. Martin. "But I think we're all right now."

And they were, for in about half an hour longer they were within sight of Mount Major, as it was called, the place where Mr. Martin was to set up the store for the lumbermen.

"Oh, what a lovely place!" cried Janet, as they caught a glimpse of it from a hill just before reaching it.

"Good place to fish," observed Ted. "I see a lake and a river."

"I fish, too!" cried Trouble.

"Doan yo' fall in!" warned Lucy, hugging the little fellow, who, in spite of his mischief, was her special favorite.

"Yes, there is plenty of water around here," said Mr. Martin. "There needs to be on account of the lumber. Well," he went on, "I don't see any of the men here yet. I guess I'm in plenty of time. I was afraid I'd be late. Now we'll unpack and get something to eat. I suppose you're hungry, aren't you, Curlytops?" he asked, with a laugh.

"Terrible!" announced Ted. "Can we cook dinner over a camp fire?"

"Maybe, some time," his father said, "But I think there's an oil stove in the bungalow and that will be better when we're in a hurry."

"Where's buffalo?" asked Trouble, looking around. "I don't see any buffalo. Has him got a hump on his back?"

"You're thinking of a camel!" laughed Janet.

"No, a buffalo had a sort of hump up near his head," remarked Teddy. "But what makes him ask about a buffalo, anyhow?"

"He means *bungalow*—the place where

we're going to live," explained Mrs. Martin with a smile. "There it is, children, over under the trees. Oh, what a fine place!"

There was a driveway at one side of the bungalow, which was made of logs, and, a little farther on, a shed where the automobile could be kept. Leading down from the front door was a path, and this extended to a lake, the waters of which were as blue as the sky. Flowing into this lake, not far from the bungalow, was a small river.

All around the lake, along the river and surrounding the bungalow were trees, trees, trees—so many that the Curlytops never could have counted them all. And here and there, in cleared places where the trees had been cut down, were rough buildings, made from logs and "slabs," that is, half-rounded pieces of wood that are sawed from logs to make the timbers square and true.

Over the door of one of the buildings was a sign:

GENERAL STORE

Seeing this Janet cried:

"Is that where you are going to keep store, Daddy?"

"I'm not exactly going to *keep* store," her father replied. "I came up here to get the store started and to show the men how to run it. They will be cutting lumber here the rest of the summer and all winter, and they will want to buy things from the store, as some of the lumbermen are bringing their families with them."

As yet none of the lumbermen had arrived, for the camp was not to open for a few days. It was needful to start the store first so the men would have something to eat when they should arrive.

Piled about the building that was marked with the store sign were many boxes and barrels. The Curlytops had seen such packages before at their father's store in Cresco, and they knew what the boxes and barrels held—sugar, canned goods, dried fruits, tea, coffee, oatmeal, overalls, hats and all the things that go to make up a general store. All these goods must be taken out of their packages and arranged on the shelves.

"Couldn't we help in the store, Daddy?" asked Ted, as his father started toward the bungalow, to open it with a key he had.

"Oh, yes, I guess so," was the answer.

"I expect a couple of men up to do the heavy work. They ought to be here now."

The bungalow was opened and the Curlytop family went inside. The more they saw of the place the better they liked it. There was a large living-room with a great fireplace, a dining-room and a kitchen on the first floor, and upstairs were bedrooms.

"And there are dishes in the pantry, too!" announced Janet, as she came back from having looked around.

"Is there anything to put on the dishes?" asked Ted, laughing. "I mean anything to eat?"

"That's what I want to know, too," laughed Mr. Martin.

"I'll soon have something ready," promised Mrs. Martin. "Come, Lucy, we must feed these hungry animals."

"I am bear—that's what I is!" cried Trouble, and he pretended to growl like a bear to show how hungry he was.

"I'll go over and take a look at the store," announced Mr. Martin. "There's wood already cut for the fire," he said.

"We'll attend to things," said Mrs. Martin. "Just bring in the food from the auto and we'll soon have a meal ready."

Mr. Martin and Ted brought in the baskets of victuals that had been brought along, and then the Curlytop boy and his father, with Trouble trailing after them, went toward the building that soon was to be made into a store for the lumbermen to trade at. Janet remained in the bungalow to help her mother and Lucy.

Mr. Martin had a key to the store building and, opening it, he and the boys went inside. All there was to be seen now were empty shelves and counters.

"But this will be a busy place in a few days," said Mr. Martin. "If those men were here now I could put them to opening the boxes and barrels. Maybe they'll come after dinner."

He went outside to count how many boxes and barrels there were piled up around the steps of the store, and while he was doing this Ted and Trouble roamed about the clearing in the woods where the different buildings were put up. Some were for the men to sleep in, another was a kitchen, where food would be prepared, and at the sight of one large building, with a smokestack sticking through the roof, Ted cried:

"Oh, is that the sawmill?"

"That's the sawmill," his father answered. "But you must never go in there unless I am with you. It's dangerous."

"Couldn't we go with mother?" Ted wanted to know.

"Well, yes, with your mother. But there is a very big saw in there to cut up the logs, and it would not only cut off your finger, if you got too close, but it would do worse. So keep away!"

Ted and Trouble promised that they would, and they teased their father so hard to take them to the sawmill now that, after he had looked over the groceries and other supplies, he consented.

Leading from the mill down into the lake was a sort of small railroad track, sloping like a little hill. And in the middle of the track, and extending up into the mill, was a big chain.

"What's that for?" asked Ted.

"That chain pulls the logs up from the river, along this inclined runway, into the mill," answered Mr. Martin. "Once the logs are in the mill they are put on a sort of platform, or on a traveling cradle, and then machinery pushes them close to the big buzz saw and they are cut up into boards."

"Is it a cat's cradle?" Trouble wanted to know.

"Well, not exactly," laughed Mr. Martin. "Come in and I'll show you. The mill isn't running now, but it soon will be."

"Does the chain pull the logs up all by itself?" Ted asked.

"No," his father replied. "A steam engine winds the chain up on what is called a drum, just as a rope is wound up on a derrick. In fact, this runway is like a derrick, only it is stretched out on the ground instead of being up in the air."

The boys were much interested in looking over the machinery of the lumber mill, and they wished for the day to come when it would start—when the engine would puff and clouds of smoke and steam would pour from the big stack in the roof.

"I think I hear your mother calling," said Mr. Martin, after a while. "We'd better have something to eat."

Ted and Trouble had been so eager to look around that for a time they had forgotten about being hungry. However, as their father now spoke of it they hurried on to the bungalow. In the door stood Lucy,

beating on the bottom of a tin pan with a big spoon.

"Dish yeah am de dinnah gong," she explained.

"Hurray!" cried Teddy, for he felt so glad and happy at coming to camp in the woods that he wanted to stand on his head.

Mrs. Martin, with the help of Janet and Lucy, had gotten a fine meal ready, and they were all so hungry that they greatly enjoyed it. When it was almost over Janet, looking from the open door out toward the lake, saw a boat approaching, in which were two men.

"Oh, two tramps are coming!" she murmured. "Will you give them something to eat, Mother?"

Mr. Martin looked to where his little daughter pointed.

"Those aren't tramps," he said.

"They have terribly ragged clothes on," said Janet.

"You mustn't think because a man wears old and ragged clothes that he is always a tramp," went on Mr. Martin. "I think those are the two lumbermen who are coming to help me set up the store. And on account of their rough work, lumber-

men cannot go about dressed up. Yes, they're lumbermen," he said, as he saw the two step from the boat, carrying their axes and some big hooks, with long, heavy handles, by which logs are turned over and put into place.

"Is this Mr. Martin?" asked one of the men, as the father of the Curlytops walked down the path toward the lake to meet them.

"That's my name," was the answer.

"Well, we were sent to help you in the store," went on one of the men. "The rest of the crowd will be over to-morrow. My name is Jack Nestor and this is my partner, Henry Hart," he concluded.

"Glad to know you," replied Mr. Martin. "Well, there is plenty to do, and the sooner we get started the better. Come on, I'll show you what's to be done."

While Mr. Martin was busy with those who were to be his helpers, and while Mrs. Martin, Lucy and Janet were clearing away the dinner things, Ted and Trouble wandered off through the woods. It was a most delightful place, Ted decided.

"The best one I've ever been to on vacation," he said.

Trouble, too, seemed to like it, running

here and there in the woods. Then the little fellow had one of his many ideas.

"Can you make me a whistle?" he asked his brother. "I want a whistle."

"Yes, I guess I can make you a willow whistle," said Ted, as he took out his knife. "There's a willow tree growing over there." He pointed to one near the bank of the lake, and soon he and Trouble were sitting on a mossy log under the drooping willow tree while Ted cut a branch and was fashioning it into a whistle for his brother.

Ted cut the bark around and pounded it to soften it so it could be slipped off, for this must be done if a whistle is rightly made. Ted used the handle of his knife to pound the bark lightly. Then he laid his knife down on the log and began to twist off the piece of bark.

While waiting for his brother to do this Trouble had wandered about the little clearing under the willow tree. Before Ted knew it Trouble was out of his sight, and, hearing the little fellow tramping in the underbrush, Ted started up after him.

"Here, come back!" he called to Trouble.

Trouble was headed for the lake, and he had been told he must not go there alone.

"Come back here, you little tyke!" cried Ted. "First you know you'll fall in and I'll have to fish you out."

"Aw right, I come back," agreed Trouble, stopping short. He feared if he did not mind he would get no whistle. "I just go to see maybe if fish in lake," he said.

"You can't tell by looking at a lake if it has fish in it or not," said Teddy. "Now you stay by me if you want that whistle."

As the boys started back toward the log on which they had been sitting, they saw a strange sight.

"Look! Look!" cried Trouble, pointing with a chubby finger toward the log. "Look at black bird takin' my whistle!"

"No, he isn't taking your whistle, I have that here!" said Teddy. "But it's a crow and he's after something. Oh, he's got my knife!" he cried a moment later, as the big, black bird rose from the log, with something glittering held fast in his bill.

CHAPTER XI

TROUBLE IN THE STORE

"Caw! Caw! Caw!" came a hoarse cry, as the black bird fluttered up off the log, carrying away Ted's bright and glittering knife, for crows like to take bright things, you know.

"Caw! Caw! Caw!" again sounded the cry.

Then Ted and Trouble noticed that it was not the crow that had the knife that was doing the cawing. It was some other crow farther off in the woods. For if the crow that had flown down and picked up Ted's knife from the log had opened its mouth to caw, it would have had to drop the knife. A crow must open its beak to call, just as you have to open your mouth to sing, or as a dog opens its mouth to bark.

"Drop my knife! Drop my knife, you funny black crow!" cried Ted.

"Frow suffin' at him! Frow suffin'!"

cried Trouble, so eager and excited that he forgot to talk straight. "Frow suffin'!"

"I'll throw something all right!" shouted Ted.

"Don't frow my whistle," begged Trouble.

Ted had been about to do this, forgetting that the stick he held in his hand was the one on one end of which he had started the whistle for his small brother.

"I'll throw a stone!" cried the Curlytop boy.

Off in the woods sounded the caw of that other crow. And, just as Ted threw a stone at the black bird that had picked up his knife, though Ted did not hit the crow, the feathered thief with the knife in his beak opened his mouth and sent out an answering:

"Caw! Caw! Caw!"

Of course as soon as it opened its mouth down fell the knife, and away the crow flew.

"You made him drop it!" cried Trouble.

"I guess he had to drop it to caw," said Ted, which was more like the truth, for the stone he had thrown did not come anywhere near the crow. "I hope I find my knife," Teddy went on.

He ran toward the place where he had seen it fall from the crow's beak, and as the bird circled overhead, crying and cawing in answer to the other, which the boys did not see, Ted and his brother searched amid the leaves for the missing knife.

After poking about for some time they picked it up, and Ted looked at it carefully to see if it might be damaged. But it was none the worse from having been nearly carried off by the crow.

"What made him want it?" asked Trouble, as the whistle-making started again.

"Oh, I guess maybe he wanted to give it to his little boy," Ted answered, with a laugh, as he carefully whittled away at the whistle.

"Has crows got little boys?" Trouble wanted to know.

"Yes, I guess so; and little girls, too," explained Teddy.

"But how can a crow boy cut with a knife?" persisted William. "How can he?"

"Well, I guess maybe he doesn't, except in fairy stories," said Ted.

"What makes crows caw?" was Trouble's next question.

"That's the way they talk."

"Oh, does crows talk?" eagerly cried Trouble. He listened a moment. Over the trees floated a cry of:

"Caw! Caw! Caw!"

"What's him crow sayin'?" he demanded.

"Oh, I don't know!" Ted had to confess. "You ask too many questions, Trouble! I can't answer half of 'em. Crows must talk among themselves same's dogs talk when they rub noses and wag their tails. Now there's your whistle. Blow on it and then you can't ask so many questions."

He shut his knife and put it in his pocket, while Trouble put the blowing end of the whistle in his lips. It gave forth a shrill, clear sound.

"'At's a fine whistle!" Trouble said. "Thanks you, Ted."

"All right, boysie! I'm glad you like it. That's it—toot away!"

As Trouble blew harder on the whistle several birds in the trees seemed to sing in answer. And again, over the trees, came the hoarse voices of the crows.

"Caw! Caw! Caw-aw-aw!" they cried.

"Maybe they wants a whistle," suggested Trouble.

"Maybe," agreed Ted, with a laugh. "Well, I'm not going to make them any. That was a bold fellow to come down and take my knife like that!"

And when Ted and Trouble reached the bungalow and told what had happened, Janet said:

"Oh, Ted! Maybe that was Mr. Jenk's tame crow."

"What, the one that tried to fly away with my knife?"

"Yes, maybe that was Jim, the lame crow, and if you could have caught him we'd get ten dollars."

Teddy shook his head.

"That wasn't Jim crow," he said.

"How do you know?" asked Janet.

" 'Cause he wasn't lame," answered her brother. "I watched him walk along on the log 'fore he picked up my knife and he didn't limp a bit."

"Maybe it was Mr. Jenk's lame, tame crow," persisted Janet, "but maybe he got well after he flew off to the woods, and maybe he's here now."

Ted shook his head in doubt.

"This is too far away for Mr. Jenk's crow to come," he said. "And he couldn't get

well. He was lame from a broken leg and Mr. Jenk said Jim would always be lame like he was 'cause one leg was shorter than the other."

"Oh," murmured Janet. "Well, anyhow, I'm glad he didn't take your knife."

"So'm I," agreed Teddy.

There were now busy times at Mount Major; at least for Mr. Martin, as he must watch over and tell the two men, Jack and Henry, as they called themselves, about putting the groceries and merchandise away on the shelves. In another day or two the lumbermen would arrive and there would be more busy scenes in the woods where the Curlytops were spending their vacation.

By the time the boxes and barrels of supplies had been unpacked and placed on the shelves, some of the lumbermen arrived. There were men who chopped down the great trees, other men who piled them on skids and wagons and hauled them to the lake or river, where they were sent down long slides, or chutes, then to be floated to the mill.

In parts of the woods too far from the water, the logs were carted to the mill on

wagons and piled up outside to wait for the sawmill to cut them into lumber.

There was a special "gang" of men to operate the sawmill, and this was the place Ted best liked to linger near. He was much interested in machinery. Trouble was, too, and went with his brother each time Ted started for the mill.

As Mr. Martin had said, some of the lumber workers brought their families to the woods with them, and these men, women and children were given homes in small cabins that were specially built for them.

In about a week after the Curlytops had arrived at the bungalow in the woods, Mount Major was a very lively place. The store was opened and doing business. Mr. Martin acted as manager of the store for a time, and he had several clerks to wait on the customers.

"It's funny to see a store in the woods like this," said Janet to her mother.

"Yes, but when men work they must eat, and to eat they have to buy things," answered Mrs. Martin with a smile. "Besides, your father makes money by coming up here to start the store. And if we had no money

we could not have things to eat and things to wear."

"I see," said Janet, with a smile.

Most of that first week was spent in getting things to rights about the camp and in setting up the store. Then, too, the sawmill had to be made ready, so at first no trees were cut.

But at last the day came when lumbering was really started, and as a special treat the Curlytops and Trouble were taken by their mother to watch one of the big trees being felled.

"Shall we be safe here?" she asked one of the choppers.

"Oh, yes," he answered. "The tree will fall over that way," and he waved his hand toward an open place in the woods.

"Mother, how can he tell just where the tree is going to fall?" asked Janet.

"Oh, they have a way of knowing," she answered.

"It all depends on the way we chop it," explained the lumberman, who overheard what Janet had asked. "It takes practice, but we can make a tree fall anywhere we want it to."

And this proved to be the case. Two men

chopped at the big trunk, one on either side. Their bright axes flashed in the sunshine and the white chips flew about.

"We must come back here after the tree is cut, and pick up some of the chips," said Mrs. Martin to the children. "Chips are fine for putting on the fire to make the tea-kettle boil quickly."

"I wish I could chop a tree," sighed Trouble.

"Oh, you mustn't ever touch one of the men's axes!" warned Mrs. Martin, for she could read Trouble's mind at times. "They are so sharp they would cut you badly."

"They're shiny, too," said Trouble. "I guess maybe a crow would like to carry one off like they took your knife, wouldn't they, Ted?" he asked.

"Ho! Ho! A crow would have a fine time trying to fly away with an axe!" laughed Ted.

"Well, but if maybe six ten dozen crows —now—tried to take a axe they could—couldn't they, Mother?" asked the little fellow.

"Well, I don't know," was the answer Mrs. Martin thought it safest to make.

Chop! Chop! Chop! went the sharp

axes to the trunk of the tree. Soon the top part began to quiver and sway.

"Look out! She's going to fall!" cried one of the lumbermen.

"We'd better run back, children!" said Mrs. Martin.

"Stay where you are, lady! You'll be all right," advised the head chopper.

Crash!

Down went the tree, and just as the lumberman had said, it fell in exactly the spot picked out for it, and nowhere near the place where Mrs. Martin stood with the Curlytops and Trouble.

"Hurray!" cried Teddy. "Good work!" He had often heard his father say that.

"Glad you liked it," laughed one of the men.

Then they began trimming from the tree the branches, so the log could be taken to the mill, either being floated down the river or carted on the wagon or skids. The skids formed a sort of long, low sled with wooden runners, and in smooth places this could be pulled over the ground, dragging logs where they were needed.

That night, after a pleasant day in the woods, during which the Curlytops had

much fun, Janet watched her mother laying aside some rings and a breastpin, as Mrs. Martin was getting ready for bed.

"You didn't find the little diamond locket I lost, did you, Mother?" asked Janet wistfully.

"No, dear, I didn't," was the reply. "But don't worry about it," she went on, as she saw the sad look on Janet's face. "Perhaps we may find it sometime, though when I didn't come across it after we packed up to come here, I began to lose hope."

"Oh, I'm so sorry!" murmured Janet.

"Don't worry," said her mother kindly, and Janet went to bed to dream that she had found the locket and that the diamond in it had grown as large as an orange. When she awakened and found it only a dream, she was very much disappointed.

However, the day that dawned was such a bright and pleasant one and there was the prospect of so much fun in the woods that Janet could not long be sad.

"Come on out and play!" called Ted.

"We have fun!" added Trouble.

"We'll play camping out in the woods," said Janet. "We'll make believe we're the

early settlers like the Pilgrims we read about in our school books, Ted."

"That'll be fun," he agreed.

"I not goin' to take any pills!" objected Trouble, as he heard that strange word. "I not sick and I not take pills!"

"You don't have to take pills!" laughed Janet. "We were talking about the Pilgrims."

"Who is them?" Trouble wanted to know.

"Oh, they used to fight with the Indians," said Ted.

"Den I be a Pigwim!" announced Trouble, which was as near as he could say it. "Does Pigwims eat?" he wanted to know.

"Of course they do!" said Teddy. "We'll go to the store and get daddy to give us things to eat in the woods," he added.

Mr. Martin was glad to have the children roam in the woods in play, and he gave them some packages of crackers for their lunch. While he was wrapping them up for Teddy and Janet, baby William wandered behind the store counter. A lumberman entered as Mr. Martin finished giving the Curlytops what they had asked for. Looking behind

the counter the lumberman gave a start and suddenly cried:

"There's trouble here!"

"Yes, I know Trouble is here," said Mr. Martin, thinking the man meant the little boy. "Come out, Trouble!" he called.

"No, but I mean there's a different kind of trouble!" exclaimed the man. "I don't mean your boy, though he may have been the cause of it."

"The cause of what?" asked Mr. Martin, starting for the counter behind which he had seen William wander.

"The cause of the molasses running all over," was the reply. "The spigot of the barrel is open and there's a big puddle of molasses on the floor. It's growing bigger!

"Look out there, young man!" he quickly cried, taking a step forward. "Look out, or you'll sit in it. Oh, too late!" he gasped. "He's gone and done it! Right in the molasses he is! Right in the molasses!"

CHAPTER XII

TED IS CAUGHT

TROUBLE grunted. Then he grunted again. Then he tried to get up from the floor where, as the lumberman said, the little fellow had sat down in a puddle of molasses.

But Trouble found he couldn't get up. His clothing stuck to the messy, sweet stuff and thus was held to the floor, almost as if it had been tacked there.

Then Trouble began to cry.

His father had run around the end of the counter to look behind it as soon as the lumberman spoke of the molasses. Ted and Janet followed their father. Thus all of them saw the trouble poor Trouble was in.

"Oh, he is stuck!" cried Ted, hardly able to keep from laughing.

"You poor dear!" murmured Janet. "I'll get you up!"

"No, don't go near him, or you'll get in

the molasses, too," warned Mr. Martin. "Stay where you are, Janet. I'll lift Trouble out. Don't cry, William," he added kindly, as he saw tears rolling down the little fellow's face. "You couldn't help it—I suppose," he went on. "That is, unless you opened the spigot of the molasses barrel."

"I only—now—er—I—now—only opened it a little bit of a way," sobbed Trouble. "I wanted to see—now—how fast it would run out and it runned out an' I—I couldn't shut it off! Oh, dear!"

"Hum! I must put a lock on my molasses barrels if you are going to be around the store," said Mr. Martin. He had first reached over Trouble's head and shut off the stream of sweet stuff which no longer dribbled out on the floor. Then Mr. Martin lifted Trouble from his sticky seat, having to pull rather hard to get the little fellow up from the floor.

"My, but you need a bath!" cried Daddy Martin, holding Trouble as far away from him as possible so the dripping molasses would not soil his own clothes. "I guess I'll dip you in the lake," he added, with a laugh.

"Oh, yes, give me a swim!" cried Trouble, thinking now only of this new fun.

"I believe I will," said his father. "Your clothes will have to be soaked, anyhow, to get the molasses off, and I may as well soak you and them at the same time. It's a warm day—just right for a bath."

"Oh, may we go in, too?" begged Ted.

"No, I'd rather you wouldn't now," his father said.

"Anyhow, we're going to play Pilgrims," said Janet. "We'll wait for you, Trouble," she went on. "We'll wait until you get cleaned up."

Telling one of the clerks in the store to have the puddle of molasses mopped up and asking another man to look after things while he was gone, Mr. Martin took Trouble down to the lake, which was not far from the woodland store.

"What in the world are you going to do, Dick?" cried Mrs. Martin, as, coming over from the bungalow, she saw her husband on his way to the lake with baby William.

"Daddy goin' put me in water!" cried Trouble, now as much delighted as he had been frightened.

"What has happened?" asked his mother.

"He sat in the molasses!" answered Ted.

"And he opened the barrel and it all ran out on the floor," added Janet.

"Oh, Trouble!" sighed his mother.

"There didn't much molasses run out," corrected Mr. Martin. "Only about a quart, I guess, for he couldn't get the spigot all the way open."

He told what had happened, and said he thought the best way was to wash Trouble and his sticky clothes at the same time.

"Yes, it is a good way," agreed Mrs. Martin. "I'll do it, though, Dick. You go clean yourself off and get back to the store."

"I guess I need a little scrubbing myself," admitted Mr. Martin, with a laugh, as he looked at the spots of molasses that had dripped from Trouble to his trousers. Luckily they were an old pair that he had put on to do some rough work about the store, and he could easily change them.

"Dis lots ob fun!" announced Trouble, as his mother sat him down in the shallow water at the edge of the lake. "I go swimmin' wif my clothes on! Ho! Ho!"

"Yes, it's fun for you," said his mother. "But it makes a lot of work for Lucy. She'll have to wash and iron your clothes.

I don't suppose there is much use in telling you not to do it again, for I don't believe you will do that same thing again. But you'll do something just as bad."

And those of you who know Trouble will, no doubt, agree with Mrs. Martin.

Everything comes to an end at last, and so did the cleaning of Trouble. Dressed in dry garments, he went off with his brother and sister to the woods to play "Pigwim," as he called it.

The children had with them some packages of crackers and other good things to eat for their lunch, and they hoped to have a lot of fun. Nor were they disappointed, for it was a lovely day to wander out among the trees of the forest.

The Curlytops and their little brother played "Pigwim" in the woods, pretending to be early Pilgrim Father settlers in fear of an attack by the Indians. Ted took the part of the Indians and made believe attack the log cabin of Trouble and Janet. The log cabin was made by piling some twigs the lumbermen had left against an old stump. Afterwards Ted pretended to chase Trouble and Janet through the woods and they hid away from him.

The children finally became tired of this game and started another. Then it was "time to eat," as Trouble said, so they found a flat stump for a table and spread out on it the lunch their father had given them from the store.

"Doesn't it taste good?" asked Ted of his sister.

"Awful good," she agreed.

"Better'n it does at home," added Ted.

"I 'ike it, too," declared Trouble.

As I suppose you have all noticed, a picnic lunch, even if it is only crackers or bread and butter, tastes better than the finest meal served on plates with silver knives and forks and a spotless tablecloth.

Suddenly, when the children were eating the last of their lunch, they heard a crackling in the bushes near them, and Trouble cried:

"It's a bear!"

But it was nothing of the sort. It was only a couple of the lumbermen breaking their way through the underbrush and slashing at it with their sharp axes.

"Hello, kiddies!" greeted one of the men, with whom the Curlytops had been friendly.

"You'd better run away from here now," he went on.

"Is a bear comin'?" asked Trouble.

"Oh, no," laughed the man. "But we're going to cut down some trees near here, and you might get hurt. Better run home."

"Couldn't we stay and watch you cut?" asked Ted.

"Yes, if you get in a safe place," was the answer.

"I'll put them where they won't get hit," said the other man.

Accordingly the Curlytops and Trouble were led to a secure place between some big rocks and tall trees, and there they could have a good view of the chopping work. Even if some branches should fall near them, the rocks and trees would keep the toppling wood off.

Then began the chopping of a giant of the forest. First one and then the other of the big lumbermen would send his axe biting deep into the wood of the tree they had marked to chop down.

Chip! Chop! Chip! Chop! sounded the axes, ringing out in the woods. Silently the children watched.

"She's going to fall!" suddenly cried Ted.

He had seen the top of the tree begin to quiver and shake, and he had learned to know that this meant the center had been chopped through.

"Stand clear!" rang out the cry of the lumbermen, to warn anyone who might chance to be coming and who did not know what was going on.

There was a moment of silence and then the great trunk crashed to the ground, breaking in its fall many smaller trees and the bushes.

"When I grow up I'm going to cut trees down," declared Ted.

"I'd rather plant them and see them grow," said Janet.

"Well, if they didn't cut trees down we wouldn't have any houses to live in," Teddy remarked.

"I s'pose so," agreed his sister. "But it's kind of sad to see a big tree that took years and years to grow chopped down in a few minutes."

In the days that followed the Curlytops had wonderfully good times in the woods. They watched the men chop down trees, they

saw the big logs floated down the lake or river to the mill, or else saw them skidded along through the forest to be sawed up into planks.

The sawmill itself was a place of great delight, and the children spent more time there than anywhere else. But they were told to be very careful, and were not allowed to go close to the giant saw unless their father or mother or one of the men went with them.

One day, when Trouble was not feeling very well—though his illness was only a childish complaint that would soon pass—Ted and Janet started for the woods together.

"Where are you going?" their mother asked them as they started off.

"Oh, no place special," answered Ted. "I thought maybe I could catch a crow."

"Catch a crow? What for?" she asked.

"If I could catch one maybe I could tame it and teach it tricks," replied the boy. "And then I could sell it to Mr. Jenk in place of his lame, tame crow that flew away."

"He'd pay us a lot of money," added

"In that hollow log," and Ted pointed to one on the ground—an old giant of a fallen tree which had rotted from the inside until it was quite hollow, like a pipe. "I'm going in and catch that fox," decided Ted. "I'd rather catch a fox, any day, than a crow."

"Yes, it's bigger," said Janet.

Neither of them stopped to think that it might be dangerous for a small boy to crawl into a hollow log after a fox. For though a fox is rather a cowardly creature, slinking around only at night to catch hens out of the coop, still a fox has sharp teeth, and, cornered in a hollow log, one would make a savage fight to get away.

"I'll crawl in and get him," said Ted, as he and his sister reached the hollow log. "You stand at the other end," he directed Janet, "and if he comes out there, grab him!"

"Won't he bite?" asked Janet.

"Oh, no!" declared Ted. And that was all he knew about it!

"Maybe you'd better poke a long stick in and drive him out that way," suggested Janet. "It's better'n crawling in."

Ted thought of this for a moment.

"I'll try it," he agreed.

THERE WAS A MOMENT OF SILENCE AND THEN THE GREAT TRUNK CRASHED TO THE GROUND.

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He thrust the longest pole he could find into the hollow log, but no fox ran out the other end into the waiting hands of Janet.

"I guess I can't quite reach him," decided Ted. "I'll crawl in after him."

He took off his coat to make the crawling easier, and started in at one end of the hollow log. Janet, as directed, was at the other end to be ready in case the fox ran out.

Teddy's head disappeared from sight inside the log. Then his body wiggled in and lastly his legs vanished. All that stuck out were his two feet, and from her end of the log Janet saw these waving up and down and from side to side. But they did not disappear. They remained outside the log.

"Why don't you crawl all the way in, Ted?" asked his sister.

"I—I—can't," came the muffled answer.

"You can't? Why not?"

" 'Cause I'm stuck! I'm stuck! Oh, Janet, I'm stuck in the log and I can't get out!" wailed Teddy.

CHAPTER XIII

ALONE IN THE WOODS

THIS was not the first time Teddy had gotten in trouble when he and Janet were alone together. Often it happened at home, and so the Curlytop girl was not as much surprised as she might have been if this was the first time.

Janet left the end of the log where she was keeping guard, to catch the fox if it should rush out, and she hurried around to the end in which Ted had crawled.

"Can't you crawl in any farther?" she asked.

The still muffled voice of her brother answered:

"No, I can't crawl a bit more! I'm stuck!"

"Well, then," said Janet, in the most natural way possible, "never mind about the fox. We don't want him anyhow. Crawl out and we'll go home."

"But I *can't!*" cried Teddy, and now his voice sounded as if he might be going to cry.

"What can't you do?" Janet wanted to know.

"I can't crawl out!" By this time Teddy was very much frightened. Janet could tell that by the catch in his voice. "I can't crawl in and I can't back up. I'm stuck! I'm stuck! You'd better go and get someone to help me out!"

But Janet was not going to run away so soon. She made up her mind to try something herself first.

"I'll take hold of your feet and pull you out," she offered. "Keep your feet still, now!" she commanded, as she went closer to the flapping shoes of her brother. "Keep 'em still or you'll kick me!"

"All right," said Teddy. "You can try, but I don't believe you can pull me out."

Janet could not. Though she tugged and tugged with both hands at Ted's shoes, bracing her own feet against the end of the log, she could not stir her brother one inch.

"Why don't you wiggle?" she finally asked, quite out of breath.

"Why don't I what?" asked Ted.

"Why don't you wiggle a little an' help

yourself?" demanded Janet. "I can't do it all alone! When I pull, you wiggle, an' maybe you'll get out that way."

"All right," agreed Ted. "But I can't wiggle very much. It's awful tight in here!"

Once more Janet took hold of his shoes and began to pull. At the same time Ted pushed with his hands backward inside the log and "wiggled."

But it seemed to be of little use. No more of Ted's legs stuck out from inside the log than at first.

Then he suddenly cried:

"Stop! Quit!"

"What's the matter?" asked Janet. "Am I hurting you?"

"No, but my shoes are coming off!" answered Ted. And even as he spoke Janet pulled so hard that the left shoe came completely off Ted's foot, and the other was partly off.

"Well, now I've got to push you," decided Janet, as she dropped the one shoe. "If I can't pull you I got to push you! Maybe you'll come out the other end with the fox."

"There isn't any fox in here," said Teddy.

"I can see clear through to the other end and there's nothing in the log but me—I'm here all right, an' I wish I could get out! Oh, dear!"

"I'll help you! I'll push," offered Janet.

She was about to push on Ted's feet as they stuck from the log, but he stopped her with a cry.

"Don't do it! Don't do it!" he begged. "If you push me any farther I'll be stuck worse!"

"What'll I do then?" asked Janet.

"You go get somebody! Get somebody to help me out!" wailed Ted.

"I will!" cried his sister, and without trying any more she hurried away through the woods.

She expected to have to go all the way to the bungalow to tell her father or mother about the plight of poor Teddy. But half way there Janet met two of the lumbermen and to them she told of her brother's plight.

"Caught in a hollow log, is he?" asked one man. "Well, we'll soon have him out."

"Show us where he is, little girl," said the other man, and Janet led the way.

On her way back through the woods with the lumbermen, the little Curlytop girl half

feared that when she reached the place where she had left Ted stuck in the log she might find his feet being nibbled by the same fox they had tried to catch. But nothing like this had happened.

There was the log; there was no sign of a fox or other wild animal; and Ted's feet were still sticking out, waving slowly.

"Here we are, Ted!" cried Janet. "I've brought back two lumbermen with me."

"Oh, get me out! Get me out!" wailed Ted, in a muffled voice.

"We'll soon have you out, little man," said one of the lumbermen. "Don't be afraid. We can easily split this log," he added to his companion.

"That's right," agreed the other. "See," he said to Janet, "this log has a big crack all the way along it. We'll just put in some wedges and they will make the crack wider. Then the hole in the log will get bigger and we can pull your brother out."

"Oh, I hope you can!" sighed Janet.

"Sure we can!" declared one of the lumbermen. "Stay quiet now, little man," he added.

And Teddy kept very still and quiet inside the log while on the outside the lumber-

men cut and drove in with their axes some wedges of wood.

A wedge, you know, is shaped like the letter V. The narrow part was put in the crack, and then the top, or wide part, was pounded on. As the V's went farther and farther into the crack, the crack opened wider. This made the hole in the log larger as the fallen tree trunk was split more widely open.

"Oh, now I can get out! Now I can get out!" joyfully cried Ted, as he felt the log loosening around him. "Now I can get out!"

And a few seconds later he managed to wriggle and back out of the log himself, little the worse because of his adventure. His face was red, for it was hot inside the fallen tree, and his clothes were covered with pieces of brown, rotten wood. But this easily brushed off.

"How did you happen to go in there?" asked one of the men.

"I wanted to drive out a fox so my sister could catch him," answered the Curlytop boy.

"Well, I wouldn't do that again," the man went on. "In the first place, no fox

will ever run into a place unless there is a way of running out again, and he can run out quicker than you can run in.

"Another thing, never try to catch a fox in your bare hands. They have very sharp teeth and they'll nip you badly. You have to wear heavy gloves when you handle a fox. But even if you had driven him out of your sister's end of the log, Teddy, I guess he would have leaped past Janet so quickly that it would have looked like a flash of lightning."

"That's right!" added the other tree chopper.

"I won't do it any more," Teddy promised.

"We didn't get a crow and we didn't get a fox," sighed Janet, rather sadly.

The lumbermen laughed, and one said:

"You tried to catch two of the hardest creatures in the world to trap. A fox and a crow are the slyest of all animals and birds, and for years so many have tried to trap and shoot them that they have grown very wise."

"There is a man who lives near us in Cresco," said Teddy, "who had a lame, tame

crow that could stand on one leg and pull a cork from a bottle."

"He could?" cried the lumbermen.

"Not really pull corks," explained Janet. "He just made a noise like a cork popping out of a bottle. But he was cute and he would stand on one leg so funny."

"But he flew away," added Teddy. "And if we could find him we'd get ten dollars reward."

"I'd look at a crow a long time before I'd give ten dollars for one; wouldn't you, Jake?" asked one man of the other.

"That's right, Sam," was the answer.

"But if you see this lame, tame crow, will you please tell us?" begged Janet. " 'Cause we'd like to take him back to Mr. Jenk and get the ten dollars."

"Yes, if we see that crow we'll try to catch him for you," promised the men.

"And if I got the ten dollars I'd buy my mother a new diamond locket in place of the one I lost for her," went on Janet.

"How was that?" asked one of the men, for they took a kindly interest in the children. Then Janet told how the ornament was lost the day she and her brother were playing house with Trouble.

"That was too bad," remarked Jake. And then, as the children went back home with the crow trap in which they had caught nothing, one lumberman said to the other:

"I guess there isn't one chance in a hundred of finding that lame, tame crow."

"I should say not," agreed the other. "Nor of finding that diamond locket, either."

Of course those at the bungalow must be told of what had happened to Ted in the hollow log, and he was warned not to try such a dangerous thing again.

Many times the Curlytops visited the general store, which was now running well under the direction of Mr. Martin. The lumbermen and their families bought their supplies at the store, and so did some of the near-by farmers. Once Silas Armstrong, on whose load of hay Trouble had gone to sleep, came to buy groceries, and he had a pleasant chat with the Curlytops.

It was about a week after Ted's adventure in the hollow log that something else happened to him. Some of the lumbermen had been sent to a distant part of the woods to build a chute, or slide, for the logs to shoot down into the river. Then a slight accident

occurred to the sawmill machinery and the foreman of it wanted all the help he could get to mend the trouble.

"I wish Jake and Sam were here," said the foreman, as he and all the other men worked hard to mend the broken machinery. "But they're away over by the new chute."

"I'll go after them and tell them to come here," offered Ted.

"Will you? All right, young Curlytop!" exclaimed the foreman. "Do you know the way?"

"Oh, yes!" answered Ted, quite confident.

If Mr. Martin had been there or in the store, which was not far from the mill, he might not have let Teddy go. But the father of the Curlytops was off in another part of the forest seeing about something connected with the business. And Ted never asked his mother if he might go. He just went.

Off he started through the woods to go to the distant place where Jake and Sam—the two men who had gotten him out of the log—were working on the chute.

At first the path through the woods was very plain, and Ted had no trouble. But after a while the trail became fainter and more than once the Curlytop boy stopped

and looked about him, listening for the sound of chopping axes.

"I don't seem to hear any," he murmured; "but I'm sure this is the right path."

But it was not, and the farther Ted wandered the more distant he got from the place where the men were working. Deeper he went into the forest until at last he had to stop and give up.

"I—I guess I'm lost!" murmured Ted. His heart began to beat strangely. It was a fearful feeling to be alone in the woods. And that is what had happened to poor Teddy.

CHAPTER XIV

A STRANGE CRY

JAKE and Sam, who had been sent to the distant part of the woods to build the long chute, of course knew nothing of Teddy having been sent to call them back to help mend the broken machinery in the sawmill. Meanwhile the foreman and his "gang" did the best they could without the two missing ones.

"I don't see why Jake and Sam didn't hurry back here to help us," said one lumberman.

"That's so," agreed another. "It would have been a lot easier if they had been here."

Just then the foreman looked up, after the hardest part of the work had been finished, and he said:

"There come Jake and Sam now."

Surely enough, the chute builders were approaching.

"Well, you took your own time getting here," said the foreman.

"Took our own time? What do you mean?" asked Jake.

"Didn't you tell us to stay in the woods and finish making that new chute to send the logs down to the river?" asked Sam.

"Yes, but a while ago I sent the Curlytop boy to tell you to hurry back here and help us. We had an accident in the sawmill, but it's all fixed now. Why didn't you two come?"

"Because no one told us to," was the answer.

"Didn't you see Teddy?" asked the foreman, whose name was Tod Everett.

"Nary a sign of him," answered Jake.

"Whew!" whistled Tod. "He must have wandered off—maybe he went fishing—and forgot to tell you. But he's a pretty good boy for his age. I don't believe he'd do a thing like forgetting on purpose."

"What do you think happened?" asked Jake.

"I'm afraid he didn't know in what part of the woods to look for you, though he was sure he knew his way," said the foreman. "But maybe his mother saw him going and

called him back. I'd better go over to the house and find out. It's getting late and will soon be dark."

Tod Everett, the foreman, tried not to let his voice sound anxious as he asked Mrs. Martin:

"Is Teddy around?"

"No," she answered. "Isn't he over at the mill with you?"

The foreman shook his head.

"He was there," he replied. "But we had an accident and——"

"An accident!" cried Mrs. Martin.

"Don't be worried! It was just that one of the saws broke. No one was hurt, and Teddy wasn't even around when it happened. But I needed Jake and Sam to help the other men, and I was going to send one of the men for them, over where they were building a chute, when Teddy offered to go. He said he knew the way."

"Yes, I suppose he does," agreed Mrs. Martin. "Didn't he go?"

"I thought he had until Jake and Sam came back just now and said they hadn't seen him," went on the foreman. "I thought maybe you saw him starting off and called him back."

"No, I didn't," said Mrs. Martin. "I am afraid something may have happened to him," she added.

"The only thing that could happen would be that he might get on the wrong trail and wander off a little bit," said Tod. "I'll get the gang out and we'll soon find him."

A few minutes later Mr. Martin arrived, and though he was worried when told about the absence of Teddy, he believed that the missing Curlytop lad would shortly be found.

"But it will soon be night!" his wife remarked.

"We'll find him before then," he said.

A searching party was quickly organized, two of them, in fact, one to go one way and the second another way. And as the shadows began to get longer, showing that darkness was on its way, the lumbermen, led by Mr. Martin, started off into the forest.

"Oh, I do hope they find Teddy before it gets dark!" sighed Janet.

"So do I," murmured her mother.

Meanwhile perhaps we had better find out what happened to Teddy.

As I have told you, he thought he surely knew the way to the place where Jake and

Sam were working on the new lumber chute. He had been there before once or twice. But as he walked along and along the path he saw it growing fainter and fainter, showing that it was not much used.

And then Teddy knew that he was lost!

But he was a brave little fellow, and, brushing his curly hair back from his eyes, he picked up a stout stick for a club and walked on.

"I guess I'd better go back home," he said to himself.

He turned about, and thought he started straight back over the way he came. But if you have ever been in the deep woods, you know how much one tree looks like another and that all the bushes seem the same. So Teddy could not tell when he had turned completely around to go back.

As a matter of fact, he turned only partly around and, instead of heading for the bungalow, he was wandering away from it almost as much as when he started straight away to get the lumbermen.

For a time Teddy tramped on, quite sure he was going back to the bungalow. He was a little disappointed that he had not been

able to find the lumbermen to tell them to go back and help at the sawmill.

"I guess Mr. Everett will think I'm not much good," mused Ted. "If I couldn't do a little errand like that he won't want me to do things for him again. It's too bad! But I didn't think it was so easy to get lost in the woods."

Teddy was more lost than he realized, and he became aware of this when he saw that it was growing dusky. The sun was beginning to set, and though it was still light out in the open, in the fields and meadows, the woods had already begun to darken, as the dying rays of the sun could not get between the trees.

After having walked, as he thought, many miles, though it was very likely not more than two, Teddy became very tired and a little frightened.

Then he happened to think of something an older boy had told him to do when lost in the woods.

"When you think you're lost in the woods, don't rush about, but sit down and wait for a while. Help may come. And, anyhow, sit down for a while until you get quiet and

aren't so excited. You can't think well when you're excited."

And Teddy was certainly excited now. I suppose you would have been that way yourself if you were lost and alone in the woods as was the Curlytop boy.

"I'll sit down and think!" decided Teddy.

He did this, waiting and hoping that some one might happen along to lead him back to camp, which he could not find by himself. But as he sat there and the shadows grew longer, he began to worry and to think that he had better be doing something for himself.

"I'll call," decided Teddy, and he sent out loud shouts.

Now, as it happened, he did not begin to yell for help until after Jake and Sam had left their working place in the woods and were on their way home. Otherwise the lumbermen might have heard the boy's cries. But chance so had it that when he was calling they were tramping through the underbrush too far away to hear him.

Also Teddy's shouts did not echo through the woods at the time the searching parties started out, for not until Jake and Sam

reached camp did it become known that the Curlytop lad was lost.

"Help! Help! Help!"

Again and again Teddy cried this, but the only answers were the echoes from the woods and hills that now were in deeper shadows.

"Oh, dear!" thought the boy. "Sitting still and shouting isn't going to do any good. I'm going to walk along."

And this is where Teddy made a mistake. He should have remained in one place, and then the searchers who soon started out might have found him. But when he walked on again, he wandered farther and farther away from them.

Teddy was in a sore plight. He was tired and hungry and lost. That was too much for one small boy. Any one of them was trouble enough all alone, but when the three came together—well, it was terrible, so Teddy thought, and I believe you will agree with him.

Still he was not going to give up, sit down, and cry about it. As long as there was a little light in the woods he would tramp on, hoping he might, somehow, wander back to the bungalow.

But as it grew darker and darker, and Teddy thought he saw strange sights and shadows in the woods, his heart beat very fast. Once he thought he saw a great bear thrusting out a hairy paw toward him, and he started to run. But he turned back in time to see that it was only a waving tree branch.

"I have got to get home! I just have to!" half-sobbed Teddy. On he ran again. It was so dark now that he could not see the ground very well, and his foot caught in a trailing vine, tripping him so that he fell.

"Oh, dear!" he cried.

But the forest ground was covered with a thick coating of fallen leaves of other years, and these made a soft cushion on which he had fallen.

Up he rose again, more desperate than before. He clenched his hands tightly, his hunger now forgotten and his only idea being to rush away out of the darkness, back to the light and cheerfulness of the bungalow.

For a moment Teddy was dazed. Then, as his mind cleared, he looked through the trees and caught a glimpse of a light. At first he thought it was a campfire, but soon

saw it was only the last fading rays of the red sunset.

"I'll go that way—toward the sun," decided Teddy.

On and on he stumbled. Once, before he knew it, he had walked into a swampy place in the woods, and his feet got wet. But this was a small matter now. His heart thumped under his little jacket, and he had to close his teeth hard to keep from screaming out.

"But I mustn't be a coward! I mustn't be a coward!" thought Teddy.

On and on he went. The red sunset died away. The woods were now very dark.

Suddenly, through the gloom, came a strange cry. It was a high, shrill wail, and at first Teddy thought some one had called to him.

"Here I am! Here I am!" he answered.

Then, as the strange, wailing cry sounded again, Teddy knew it was no person calling.

It was some animal!

CHAPTER XV

THE LONELY CABIN

TEDDY MARTIN was as brave as any boy of his age could be. But he was like nearly all other boys. When he heard or saw something about which he did not know he became alarmed.

Perhaps if he had seen an elephant or a tiger really coming toward him in the woods, he might not have been half as frightened as he was at that strange cry from some unknown animal. For seeing a lion, a tiger, or an elephant lets you know at once what you have to expect. And it may be that by running, dodging and hiding you can get away from the beasts.

"What is it that's howling at me?" thought Ted.

He did not know, and there was none present to tell him.

That was the worst of it—not knowing what animal was trailing after him—stalk-

ing him up in the trees, maybe—following him!

Teddy had stopped after calling out that he was there, thinking it was some person who had been sent to rescue him. But after a moment, when he knew that it was some animal, the boy prepared to run on again. Though where he would go in the darkness, and how he could save himself from the beast, he did not know.

"But I'm not going to stay here to be jumped on and clawed and bitten!" thought the Curlytop lad.

There flashed through his mind all the stories he had ever read or heard about wild beasts in the woods at night. For a few seconds Ted thought the worst—that it might be a lion or a tiger.

Then his better sense came to his aid.

"How silly I am!" he exclaimed to himself, as he started off again in the darkness. "Of course there aren't any lions or tigers here. They live only in hot countries in the jungle. The only wild animals around here that might hurt me are bears, foxes and—bobcats!"

Teddy almost forgot about this last-named beast. But he had heard the lumber-

men talking about it only the other day. Bears, the wood-choppers had said, were very scarce and hard even for a hunter to find, so Ted knew he need not worry about them. He, himself, had seen a fox, and had noted how the brown creature with the big tail had so quickly run away.

"A fox won't fight unless you corner him," thought Teddy; "and I'm not going to corner this one! Besides, a fox doesn't climb a tree, and this animal is up in the trees overhead."

He knew this, because he had heard the branches rustling as the animal sent out its strange cry.

There was only one thing left that the beast could be.

"It's a bobcat!" whispered Ted to himself.

And as he heard again the strange, wailing cry of the beast, he felt sure he had guessed right.

"They claw terrible, and bite!" thought Ted, with a shiver of fear, for he had heard the lumbermen talking about the bobcat, or lynx, which is another name for it. "But maybe it can't find me," thought the Curly-top boy hopefully.

He wished that it was daylight, and then he wished that he had his electric pocket flash lamp with him, so that he might see which way to go. But he had to make the best of it, and so he slipped along as well as he could, gliding amid the trees and bushes of the dark forest.

He bumped into stumps and the trunks of trees. His feet became entangled in vines and, tripping, he fell. He stepped into mud puddles of cold water. All in all, poor Ted was quite miserable.

Now and then he heard a rustling in the tree branches overhead, and he felt sure the bobcat was following him, waiting for a chance to drop down on him and bite or scratch.

"I'm going to yell!" decided Teddy. "Maybe that will scare that bobcat."

And yell he did as loudly as he could. He not only wanted to scare away the bobcat, if one was really chasing him in the tree tops, but Ted also wanted to let those who might be searching for him, know where he was.

Again and again Ted cried, sending his ringing voice out in the darkness of the forest.

Had those who were searching for him only been near enough they would surely have heard him and come to his rescue. There were two rescue parties out, as I have told you. Mr. Martin led one and Tod Everett, the foreman of the lumber gang, led the other.

Mrs. Martin remained at home in the bungalow with Janet, Trouble and Lucy. They were much frightened and worried, and more than once Janet would listen for any sound outside the cabin and then she would ask:

"Do you think they'll find Teddy, Mother?

"Of course they will," would be the answer.

"When?" Janet would ask.

"Oh, soon now," Mrs. Martin would reply. But as the hours passed and the rescuers did not come back with the missing little boy, Mrs. Martin became more and more worried, though she did not say so.

"Po' honey lamb!" mused Lucy, as she rocked Trouble to and fro to keep him asleep, for he was restless. "I done wisht he'd come!"

"So do I," murmured Janet. And then

her mother said she had better go to bed and rest.

"But I'll not sleep," Janet answered. "I'm going to stay awake all night—or until Teddy comes home."

However, even worry about her beloved brother could not long keep Janet awake, and soon her eyes were closed, as were Trouble's. Then Mrs. Martin and Lucy sat up, listening and hoping.

Mr. Martin had been very sure he or the other searchers would soon find Teddy. He thought the boy had merely taken the wrong path through the woods and was wandering about, not far from the bungalow.

But the truth of it was that Teddy had gone farther than even he realized, and much farther than his father thought a small boy could walk in the time he was gone.

"Another thing that's against us," said one of the lumbermen, "is that it's so dark. There's any number of little hollows and ravines that the boy could be in and we'd miss him even in daylight. And after dark it's harder yet."

"I know it is," said Mr. Martin. "But I think he'll hear us shouting and answer

us. Besides the moon will be up pretty soon, and it won't be so dark."

But as for the shouts, Ted did not hear those of the rescuers, and they did not hear his cries as he yelled to drive away the bob-cat, if such it was that was trailing him. So the search was kept up.

As for Ted, he wandered on and on, really going farther away from the bungalow and his friends instead of toward them.

The boy listened after he had shouted to drive away, as he hoped, the strange wailing beast. Then, as he did not hear any sound in the tree tops and that strange cry did not again make him shiver, he took heart.

"I guess I've scared him away," thought Teddy.

He started off again in the darkness as best he could. But he had not taken many steps before that same cry welled forth again, sending the shivers up and down poor Ted's back.

"You old beast!" he cried. "Why don't you jump down and be done with it! I'll hit you with a club if you do!"

Ted firmly grasped the piece of tree branch he had picked up and waited. He stood under a tree, and he thought if the

bobcat did leap down the tree would be a good thing to dodge behind.

Then, just as Mr. Martin had told those in his party would happen, the moon rose. Or, rather, it came out from behind some clouds that, earlier in the evening, had hidden the silver disk. The woods were now much lighter, and for this Ted was glad, even though the moon did cast strange shadows.

Suddenly, as he looked up into the tree from which the strange animal seemed last to have cried, Ted saw two green and gleaming eyes. The moon shone on them.

And then a voice seemed to call:

"Who! Who! Whoo-oo-oo!"

Instantly Ted burst into a laugh.

"Why, it's only an owl!" he told himself. "It was an owl that was following me through the woods. But I didn't know owls cried like a bobcat. I thought they only made a sound like just now—'who!' I'm glad it's only an owl!"

The owl, for such it was, flew away. Ted saw it go, but he could not hear the flapping wings, for an owl flies on silent pinions, its wings being covered with such soft feathers as to make scarcely a sound. In this way

an owl can fly close to the creature it wishes to catch without being heard.

Ted laughed again as the owl hooted and vanished in the night. The boy felt better now, and he was beginning to wonder if he would have to spend the night alone in the forest when, suddenly, that same strange cry sounded again. This time so near at hand—in a tree directly over Teddy's head —that the boy jumped.

"It wasn't the owl after all!" he thought. "It must be the bobcat still after me!"

There was a rustling in the leaves of the tree, and Ted dodged behind the trunk of the one he had picked out as a refuge. Then as the moon became a bit brighter, for more clouds passed from it, the boy caught sight of two other eyes, gleaming red and green as they reflected the shine of the moon.

"He's looking right at me!" thought Ted, for, indeed, the eyes seemed to stare at him. "Come on down here and I'll hit you with this club!" cried the boy boldly.

However the bobcat—and by a glimpse he had of the beast Ted was sure it was a lynx—did not accept the invitation to come down and be clubbed. The animal snarled again and moved out on the limb over Ted's

head so the boy had a good view of it. Then he saw more clearly what it was—an animal like a cat, only three times as large, and with curious tufts of fur on its ears. The lynx is about the only animal that has ear tassels.

Suddenly Ted decided on a bold move. If the bobcat would not come down to be clubbed, the boy would not exactly climb up the tree to hit it—that would be dangerous indeed—but Ted could throw his club at the beast.

"That's what I'll do!" decided the boy.

Ted was a good ball player for a boy of his age, and could throw straight. He had often gone after chestnuts in the woods, and had thrown clubs up into the trees to bring down a shower of brown nuts.

Now he stepped back until he saw that he had a clear aim for the bobcat on a limb out over his head. Ted began to swing his club back and forth.

"I've thrown a club farther than this!" thought Ted.

He drew back his arm and let fly the heavy piece of wood. It went straight for the bobcat, and, somewhat to Ted's surprise,

it struck the animal on the nose, its most tender spot.

Instantly it felt the blow of the club on its nose, the lynx sent out a loud howl. Then it snarled and began tearing at the branch with its sharp claws, so that it sent down a shower of bark on Ted.

Then, with another howl, as it rubbed its sore nose between its paws, the lynx turned as if to run down the tree trunk.

"He's coming after me!" thought Ted. "I've made him good and mad and he's coming after me. I'd better run!"

Before this the boy had "invited" the lynx to come down and be clubbed. But now that he actually saw the beast coming after him, as he thought, Ted could not stand it. Turning, he ran away.

The moon now gave better light than at first, and Ted could see to keep out of the way of trees and bushes. Thus he made better speed.

On and on he ran, not stopping to listen to learn if the lynx were coming after him. He stepped into puddles, but his feet were wet anyhow, and he no longer minded this. Suddenly he saw before him a well made

path through the trees—a path that seemed to have been often used.

"Maybe this is the way home!" thought Ted. "I hope it is!"

He paused for a moment before turning into this path. He listened. No longer did he hear the rustling in the tree branches overhead, showing that the lynx was following him. Nor did he hear that strange, wailing cry.

"Maybe I drove him away when I hit him on the nose!" thought Ted.

He started down the path, running as fast as he could. Then, a little later, he saw that it did not lead to the bungalow at Mount Major. Instead it led to a little clearing, and in the midst of this place, where the trees were cut down, stood a lonely cabin.

Who lived there? Did anyone? Would it be best for Ted to knock and ask to be taken in for the night?

CHAPTER XVI

THE TRICK CROW

While Ted was standing on the edge of the clearing looking at the light gleaming from the lonely cabin and wondering whether or not he should go up to it and ask for shelter, the search for him was going on in another part of the woods.

As it grew darker and darker and got later and later, even Mr. Martin began to give up hope of finding Ted that night. And some of the men in the party led by the foreman, Tod Everett, spoke out and said:

"There's no use going on any farther. The boy's probably asleep in some hollow tree or covered with leaves to keep himself warm in some ravine. We might as well give up until daylight."

But the foreman would not give up unless Mr. Martin asked him to, and so he decided to circle around and meet the boy's father.

The two searching parties had separated, one going one way and one another, and at times they were quite far apart. But as the night grew darker the two bands of men drew near together until at last Tod was able to call to Mr. Martin, asking:

"What do you say? Shall we keep on?"

Ted's father considered. He knew that the men were tired, and yet he did not want to go back to the bungalow and have his wife meet him to ask:

"Didn't you find him?"

It would be better to keep on searching even all night.

But one of the lumbermen had an idea which in the end turned out to be a very good one.

"Why not go back to the bungalow and see if there is any news?" he suggested.

"What do you mean—news?" asked the foreman.

"I mean maybe the boy has wandered back there himself, or maybe some one has telephoned in that they have him at their farm. There's lots of telephones around this part of the country. Nearly every farmer has one, and I know two trappers who have telephones and wireless sets, too. So

maybe some of them have picked up Ted, or he may have wandered to their shacks. And there's a telephone in the store. I guess Ted could tell who he was and where he was from."

"Yes, he could do that!" exclaimed Mr. Martin. "That's a good plan, Jake. We'll go back and see if there is any news. As you say, Ted may be back there now, or some one may have telephoned in."

Now we shall see what Ted himself did. For a few moments he stood staring at the lonely cabin from which gleamed a cheerful light. The boy listened.

No longer did the owl hoot. No longer did he hear the weird cry of the bobcat or the noise made as the creature crept along in the tree tops. And from the cabin came not a sound at first. There was only the cheerful light.

Then suddenly from a window of the cabin—a window that was open, as Ted could tell by the flapping curtain—there sounded a voice speaking. And to Ted's amazement the voice said in rather strange, loud tones:

"This is station Q Q Z. The next number on our radio program will be selections by

the Harmony Band. Just a moment please!"

Ted could scarcely believe his ears. One moment to be hooted at by an owl and chased by a bobcat in the midst of dark and lonesome woods. The next minute to come upon a lighted cabin and hear from it the loud speaker of a wireless outfit!

For it was radio music that a moment later sounded on Ted's ear—sweet melodious strains floating out into the darkness, brought to that lonely cabin by the mysterious electric waves and sent out by means of light bulbs and a loud speaker.

It was wonderful!

For a moment Ted stood there listening. He knew the Harmony Band. Many a time he had listened to it over his father's wireless set at home when the musical organization played at the Q Q Z station.

"Hurray!" cried Ted aloud, as the music welled out on the night. "I'm safe now!"

Quickly he hurried across the clearing toward the lighted cabin. The music was louder and plainer as he drew near. It was even so loud that when he knocked on the door his tapping was not heard. Realizing this, and not wanting to wait until the music

stopped, Ted opened the door and walked in.

He found himself within a well-furnished bungalow, somewhat like the one at Mount Major, only not so large. In the main room was a man and his wife and a boy about Ted's age. And this boy was leaning over the radio instrument set in one corner on a table, making some adjustments to it.

"Tune it down a little, so it isn't so loud," said the boy's mother, as Ted entered.

As the boy turned the knob of the variable condenser, softening the musical sounds from the black mouth of the loud-speaker horn, they all turned and looked at Ted.

He met their gaze smiling.

"Hello!" exclaimed the man, in some surprise, though his voice was friendly.

"How'd you get in?" asked the boy at the radio instrument. Then he turned the switch and cut off the battery power from one of the lights so that the music no longer sounded.

"I came—I came in the door," said Ted. "I knocked, but I guess you didn't hear me 'cause the music was going." And then, like the "radio bug" he was fast becoming. Ted eagerly asked:

"Do you get any other stations besides Q Q Z?"

"Sure I do!" answered the other boy, and in a moment, though hardly a dozen words had been spoken, the two lads were firm friends—just because of their interest in radio.

"We have a set home," went on Ted, "but we haven't any loud speaker yet. I want dad to get one."

"Do you live around here?" asked the woman.

"I don't remember you," said the man.

"I'm over at Mount Major. My father has charge of the store at the sawmill," explained Ted.

"Oh, Tod Everett's outfit!" exclaimed the man.

"Yes, he's the foreman," went on Ted. "I'm lost."

"Lost!" cried the other boy.

"Yes. I started out this afternoon to bring back two of the men who were building a lumber chute. There was an accident at the mill and Mr. Everett needed all the hands to fix it. But I couldn't find Jake and Sam and I got lost, and a bobcat chased

me, but I hit him on the nose with a club and——"

"You don't mean to say you hit a bobcat with a club!" exclaimed the woman.

"Well, I did. But I guess it was sort of an accident," admitted Ted.

"And you've been lost since early afternoon!" cried the boy. "You must be terribly hungry!"

"I am," confessed Ted.

"Oh, you poor boy!" murmured the woman. "We've had supper, but I can get you something. Why, your folks must be worried to death about you."

"I guess they are," admitted Ted. "Course, I've been lost before. But not like this. If I could send word to the bungalow they'd know I am all right now. But you can't send word over your wireless," he added to the boy. "You only have a receiving set, haven't you?"

"That's all. I'm not allowed to send."

"But we can telephone in the regular way," said the man. "Is there a telephone in your place?" he asked.

"There is in the store," Ted answered

"I'll call up your family and let 'em know you're all right," the man offered.

"Now if you go with my wife she'll get you something to eat," he said.

You may be sure Ted was only too glad to go. Into the kitchen, while food was being set out, the boy came from the sitting room to help his mother. Ted learned that the family was named Brixton, and that the boy was called Harry.

Now that he was taken in and cared for, Ted began to know just how hungry he was, and he was so busy putting the food in the place where it ought to go—in his mouth and stomach—that he hardly heard Mr. Brixton telephoning to the store.

It did not take long to be connected with Mount Major, and Mrs. Martin answered the telephone, for her husband and the men had not yet gotten back.

The way of it was this. Mrs. Martin was sitting out in front of the bungalow with Lucy, for the night was warm. Janet and Trouble were in bed asleep, and the faithful colored maid was trying to comfort Mrs. Martin, telling her that Teddy would surely be found soon.

Then the telephone in the store rang very hard. There was no one to answer it, for

the place was closed at night. However, Mrs. Martin heard the jingling bell.

"Maybe that means something," she said. "I'll answer it."

And you can imagine how happy she was when Mr. Brixton's voice sounded over the wire, telling her the lost boy had been found and was, even then, in his cabin eating a late supper.

"Oh, are you sure it's my Teddy?" asked the now happy mother.

"Of course I am," answered Mr. Brixton. "I'll let him talk to you himself."

And soon Teddy and his mother were exchanging joyful words. Briefly Teddy told what had happened to him. Then Mr. Brixton, who had come to live in the cabin in the wood for his summer vacation, informed Mrs. Martin just how his place could be reached by the road.

"My husband and all the men are out in the woods now looking for Teddy," said Mrs. Martin. "I can't drive the auto over, as I don't want to leave my other two children here. But as soon as my husband comes back I'll send him after Teddy."

"No hurry at all," said Mr. Brixton, with

a laugh. "We'll be glad to keep him all night."

Ted was happy now. He was safe with his new friends, he had had a good supper, and his mother, at least, knew where he was. Now he could listen to the wireless music with a glad heart.

And that is what he and Harry did. When the second supper had been cleared away—though, truth to tell Ted did not leave much in the way of food on the table—the two boys "fussed" over the radio instrument, "picking up" distant stations.

It was not long after Mrs. Martin had received the joyful news of Ted's safety over the telephone that her husband and the other searchers came back to Mount Major. The first thing Mr. Martin asked was:

"Any news?"

"The very best!" cried his wife, happily. "Teddy's in the woods cabin of Mr. Brixton."

"I know where his place is!" said Tod Everett. "My, but I'm glad that boy's found!"

"So am I," murmured Mr. Martin, and all the lumbermen said the same thing.

"I didn't want to speak about it before," went on the foreman to Mr. Martin. "But

there are wildcats in the woods—lynx, you know. I was afraid some of them might have scared the boy."

"I hope they didn't," replied the father.

But if Ted had not exactly been frightened by the bobcat, he was so near to it that, as Tod Everett said later, "they wa'n't no fun in it!"

In a short time Mr. Martin and the foreman were on their way in the automobile to Mr. Brixton's cabin, and there Ted was found, joyfully listening to music caught by the wireless instrument which worked just as well, and perhaps better, in the lonely woods than it does in your city home, if you live in the city.

"Well, Ted, you had quite an adventure!" his father greeted him.

"I had a lot of 'em!" replied Ted. Then he told some of the things that had happened to him, while the others wondered at his pluck and spirit.

Thanking the kind Brixton family for their care of Ted, Mr. Martin was soon on his homeward way with the lost boy, and a little later there was a joyful reunion in the bungalow at Mount Major.

Janet awakened, having had a bad dream,

and her first question was a sleepy inquiry if her brother had come home.

"Yes, dear, he's here, and safe," whispered her mother.

Then Janet turned over with a contented sigh and went sound asleep again. Trouble did not awaken, and it was not until morning that he knew the whole story of Ted being lost and found.

You may be sure Ted was warned not to get lost again, and of course he said he would not. The foreman could not forgive himself for having let the Curlytop boy go on the errand to summon the two men from the log chute.

"Oh, that was all right," said Mr. Martin. "Ted was just as likely to have gotten lost playing out in the woods."

But Ted promised to be more careful after this.

Trouble was soon himself again after his little illness, and as a sort of celebration he and the Curlytops went one day for another picnic in the woods, taking their lunch with them. They were warned not to, and promised they wouldn't, go far away.

Ted and Janet were making a playhouse near an old stump, and Trouble had wan-

dered off a short distance to look for pretty stones. Suddenly the little fellow came toddling back in a hurry, to cry:

"Somebody's knockin'!"

"Knocking? What do you mean, Trouble?" asked Ted.

"Listen!" ordered William, holding up one hand as he had seen his mother do.

To the ears of Ted and Janet came a rat-at-at-tat-tat! sound.

"Hear 'em knockin!" whispered Trouble.

"I know what that is," declared Ted. "It's a woodpecker picking holes in a tree so he can get the worms and bugs. It's a woodpecker knocking, that's what it is."

"Does he want to come into our playhouse?" asked Trouble.

"No, I don't think so," answered Janet. She looked up in the trees overhead, to see if she could find the tapping woodpecker, then suddenly, as she caught sight of another bird, she exclaimed:

"Look, Ted! The tame crow! There's Mr. Jenk's lame, trick crow!"

CHAPTER XVII

THE SAWDUST FIRE

TEDDY was piling some sticks up against the stump, to make it look more like a playhouse. But as he heard his sister call out about the lame, tame crow, the Curlytop boy dropped the sticks and cried:

"Where is he? Show him to me and I'll catch him and get the ten dollars. I'll give you half! Where is he, Janet?"

"Up there!" and his sister pointed amid the trees.

Ted came and stood beside her until he could look up along her outstretched arm, hand and finger.

"What you playin'?" asked Trouble, who had come back, tired of looking for pretty stones. "I wants play game!"

"This isn't any game," explained Janet. "I'm showing Teddy where Mr. Jenk's crow is—the lame, tame crow. Do you see him, Ted?" she asked.

AN INSTANT LATER HE SPREAD OUT HIS WINGS AND SO RED AWAY.

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"Yes, I see a crow," he answered a moment later. "But how do you know he is Mr. Jenk's?"

"Because! Look how he stands!" answered Janet.

As she spoke the woodpecker tapped again.

Tap! Tap! Tappity-tap-tap! Rat-a-tat! went the hard bill of the woodpecker on the hollow limb of a tree. It was like a distant little drum.

And as surely as Ted and Janet looked, to say nothing of Trouble peering up into the trees—as surely as the children looked, when the sound of the woodpecker's bill echoed through the woods, the crow stood on one leg. At least it seemed so to the children.

"Look! Look!" cried Janet. "He's standing on one leg just like Mr. Jenk's crow used to do!"

"And he has the other leg sticking out," added Ted. "Janet, I believe this is the tame crow!" he exclaimed. "But how did it ever get away up here in the woods?"

"I don't know," answered his sister.

The woodpecker kept on tapping, for that was his way of getting something to eat—

bugs and worms that he pulled out of holes he drilled in the rotten wood of the tree. The woodpecker cared nothing about the crow.

And as the woodpecker tapped the crow still stood on one leg, with the other, as nearly as the children could see, stuck out to one side, stiff and straight.

"That surely is Mr. Jenk's crow!" declared Janet.

"If he'd only pop like a cork coming from a bottle we'd be certain," said Teddy. "Then I'd get him."

"How can you get him?" Janet wanted to know.

"I'll climb the tree!" cried Teddy. "I can do it!"

He started toward the tree, but just then Janet cried:

"Look! I think he's going to pop!" She meant that the crow might be going to imitate the pulling of a cork from a bottle. "He's got his mouth open," went on Janet.

Teddy, too, saw this, and he was beginning to make very sure that it was Mr. Jenk's crow when suddenly, as the black bird had his mouth open, there sounded at some distance in the woods the cry of:

"Caw! Caw! Caw!"

It was another crow hoarsely calling, and as the noise came to the crow that was standing on one leg, he gave forth an answering:

"Caw! Caw! Caw!"

"Oh, dear!" cried Janet as she heard this. "He was just going to pop the cork when that other crow hollered and made him holler. But I'm sure it was Mr. Jenk's lame, tame crow, Ted."

"I think so, too. Anyhow, I'll go up the tree and get him!"

Why Teddy thought he could climb a tree and catch the crow I can't tell you. Certainly if the boy had been a bit older, or if he had stopped to think, he would have known that a bird that can fly and hop cannot be caught by some one climbing a tree after it.

And that's just what happened to Teddy. No sooner did he start to climb the tree than again the cawing sounded distantly in the woods. It was answered by the crow who was still standing on one leg. And then this black bird that the Curlytops were watching suddenly put both claws down on the limb.

An instant later he spread out his wings

and soared away, flying off through the trees.

"Oh, he's gone!" sighed Janet.

"Maybe I can watch where he goes!" cried her brother.

He ran forward through the trees, but a crow can fly much faster than a small boy can run—or even a large boy for that matter—and soon the black bird was lost to sight.

"Oh, well, maybe he'll come back," said Janet, trying to comfort her brother.

"I hope he does," said Teddy. "I'd like to get that ten dollars. I'm sure it was Mr. Jenk's crow."

But when they told their father and mother about it Mr. and Mrs. Martin only laughed.

"It couldn't be the same crow that got away from our neighbor, Mr. Jenk," Mr. Martin said. "I don't believe it would fly up this far, though of course a crow that wasn't lame could fly many miles."

"But he stood on one leg, just like Mr. Jenk's tame crow used to when we snapped our fingers, or made a tapping sound," explained Ted.

"Yes, birds often stand on one leg," said

his father. "And so do chickens. Lots of times I've seen one of our roosters stand on one leg with the other drawn up under his feathers to keep warm."

"Well, maybe it wasn't Mr. Jenk's crow, but it looked like him and it acted like him," decided Janet.

However, there was no help for it. The crow, whatever crow it might be, had flown away and might never be seen again. The Curlytops were a bit sad and disappointed for a while, but soon got over this feeling as there were so many things to do in the woods and so much fun to have in the lumber camp.

Ted had gotten all over his scare of being lost in the woods and of being followed by the bobcat. In fact he wanted to start out to try to hunt the lynx.

"We could easy catch him," he said to his father.

"I hardly think so," said Mr. Martin, with a smile. "A lynx is almost as shy as a fox unless he is trailing some animal he isn't afraid of."

"But he followed me," said Teddy.

"Well, it just wanted to see who you were," said the boy's father. "I don't be-

lieve the lynx would have jumped down on you to scratch or bite you. It was just curious."

Some of the lumbermen said the same thing, adding that not unless they were cornered would a bobcat attack a man. So Ted was really not in as much danger as he had tried to think he was. Still it was scary enough for the little chap.

Work at the lumber camp went on from day to day. Dozens of great trees were chopped down to be sawed up into boards. Quite a pile of sawdust was mounting near the mill now, and the children loved to play in this. They would climb to a point near the top of the pile. Then they would leap into it near the bottom and they could not get hurt because the sawdust was so soft.

However, it got into their shoes, so most of the time they played in the sawdust barefooted. But it also got down inside their clothes and scratched them; so that every time they played in the sawdust pile they had to go in and take off their clothes, shaking them out to get rid of the ticklish, powdered wood particles. Still they thought this was part of the fun.

Once, when Trouble climbed to a higher

point for the jumping off place than he had ever before been allowed to reach, and when he had jumped into the sawdust, Ted and Janet couldn't find him.

"Trouble! Trouble! Where are you?" cried Janet, looking down the sawdust slope for a sight of her small brother.

There was no answer and not a sign of him.

"Oh, Ted!" called Janet. "Trouble's gone!"

"He's down in the sawdust!" Ted answered. "He must have jumped into a hole and he's covered up. We'll have to dig him out!"

They did not wait to call or run for help, but, with their hands, began digging in the soft and fluffy pile. In a few seconds they had uncovered Trouble's head. He was all right, except that he was rather badly frightened. As Teddy had explained, Trouble had sunk down in a soft part of the sawdust pile, and more of the dust sliding down had covered him up.

"Are you hurt, Trouble?" asked Janet.

"Me 'ike it," he answered, with a laugh. "I hab 'ots ob fun!"

Back he climbed to jump off again, but

Ted would not let him leap from so great a height.

"If we hadn't been here you might have been buried in the sawdust all night," warned Teddy.

"It be nice an' warm in there—nice as my bed!" declared Trouble. And that is all concerning the danger they could impress on him.

The sawdust pile continued to be a place of much fun for the Curlytops. Sometimes they would start at the top and slide to the bottom of the big heap, getting their curly hair full of the dust, to the despair of their mother and Lucy.

"But chilluns suah hab got to play!" chuckled the black maid, as she used the brush.

And play the Curlytops did!

Mr. Martin did not want to spend too much time in the woods, as his own store, back at Cresco, needed attention. But there was so much to do at Mount Major in order to get the lumber store well started and the men who were to be left in charge needed so much advice that the father of the Curlytops had to remain longer than at first he had intended.

However, Ted, Janet and Trouble did not mind, as they thought there was no finer place in all the world than the woods where they were camping. And as the children liked it and as it was doing them good to be out in the woods and the fresh air, Mrs. Martin was willing to stay.

Mr. Martin had nothing to do with the cutting of the trees and the floating of them to the mill to be cut up into lumber. But he owned some shares in the company, which is the reason he took such an interest in the store. He wanted to see it do well.

So the Curlytops remained in the woods, and it began to look as though the whole summer would be spent there.

"I think it's the best vacation we ever had," said Ted.

"So do I," agreed his sister.

"Certainly the children never looked better," declared Mrs. Martin. "I'm glad we came."

There were so many things to watch in the lumber business that the children never found time hanging heavy on their hands if they did not care to play. They could visit the mill, watch great trees being chopped down, they could see the men making up

rafts in the river or the lake and they could see the sawed boards being carted off to be shipped on railroad trains.

"I like best to see the logs go down the chute into the river," said Ted to his sister, when they were talking about the different sights around camp. "Let's go over there now," he suggested.

"Are you sure you won't get lost?" asked Janet. For it was in going to this chute before that Ted wandered off and got lost in the woods.

"Oh, I know the way now," he said. "Come on!"

The Curlytops started, but Trouble called after them:

"I 'ants to go!"

"Shall we take him or hide?" asked Ted. Often when they did not want William to tag after them, the brother and sister would hide. After Trouble had tearfully searched for them, not finding them, he would go to his mother to be comforted. In this way Ted and Janet would find a chance to slip off where they wanted to go.

"Oh, let's take him along—don't hide from him," said Janet, who had a soft spot in her heart for Trouble.

"Come on then," invited Ted.

Soon the three children were wandering through the woods on the way to the lumber chute. The path was plain now, being much worn by constant use, and they could not get lost. So their mother was not worried about their trip, only warning them to be careful of Trouble.

"We will," promised Janet.

Well, of course she meant to be, and so did Ted. But you never could tell what Trouble would do.

When the children reached the place they found that the men were away. The choppers had gone farther back in the woods to cut down more trees, having sent down the chute all that were near it.

That is, all the logs had been sent down but one, and this had stuck in the chute near the top, being balanced like a teeter-totter, or seesaw, on the very edge of the chute.

The log was perfectly balanced at the middle, half of it hanging down the chute and the other half extending over the end where the men stood to start the logs on their trip to the river, a hundred feet or more below.

Before Ted or Janet could stop him,

Trouble had climbed up on the chute and had gotten astride the log. Then he found that it moved up and down, like a seesaw.

"Trouble hab fine ride!" he said.

He wiggled himself until he actually had the log moving up and down, with him on it. A moment later the log might have become unbalanced and have gone down the chute, taking Trouble with it to the river below. Ted saw the danger at once, and in an instant sprang and pulled his little brother from the log.

"Trouble, you shouldn't do that!" he cried.

"I want wide!" protested the little fellow.

"Yes, you'd have one ride too many if you rolled down the chute into the river with the log," said Ted.

"Hi there! Keep away from that chute!" shouted some of the men, coming back just then with teams that had hauled more logs to be slid down. "Keep away!"

"I am," Ted answered. "I was just taking Trouble away!"

And, for his own good, so he would not again do anything so dangerous, the men scolded Trouble and made him cry. Then he promised not to climb up on the chute again.

It was better to have Trouble crying unhurt than to have him crying after an accident. Ted and Janet knew this.

For a time they watched the men rolling the logs into the chute and saw them go pitching to the river far below. Then, having had enough of this fun, the Curlytops and Trouble wandered back through the forest to the bungalow.

As they neared it they saw some clouds of smoke floating over the trees.

"Must be running the sawmill engine extra fast," said Ted.

"Don't you smell something burning?" asked Janet.

Ted sniffed the air and shook his head to say that he smelled nothing.

"Well, I do!" cried Janet. She ran on a little farther, and then she saw what it was.

"Ted! Ted!" she shouted. "The big sawdust pile is on fire!"

CHAPTER XVIII

TROUBLE HAS A RIDE

For a moment or two Teddy thought his sister was "pretending," as she often did, or that she was "fooling" him. But she seemed so much in earnest as he looked at her that he could not but believe what she said was true. Still he asked:

"Honest, is it burning?"

"Cross my heart it is!" answered Janet, this being the strongest way she had of letting her brother know it was the truth she was speaking. "The sawdust pile is truly on fire!"

And a moment later Ted saw it for himself. The big pile of fine, wooden dust thrown off by the big buzz saw was blazing and smoking, and running around it were many of the lumbermen.

"Oh, I go get my fire engine!" cried Trouble. He pulled his hand away from Janet who was holding him.

"No, you stay right with me!" she ordered, running after him.

Trouble had a toy fire engine that sometimes squirted real water out of a tiny hose that was fast to it. I say "sometimes," for often the fire engine could not be found, and, when found, it might not work because Trouble had stuffed sand or something else in the hose. But now his thought was of this toy as he saw the burning sawdust pile.

"I put it out wif my engine," he said.

"You'd better keep away," advised Ted. "This is going to be a bad fire," and he took hold of Trouble's other hand to help Janet hold the little fellow.

"Do you think it will be bad, Ted?" asked Janet, in a low voice.

"I guess so," he answered. "Look at the smoke!"

There was a great cloud of it now swirling around the sawmill.

"Do you think our bungalow will catch?" Janet next wanted to know.

"Oh, I guess not," said Ted hopefully. "The wind isn't blowing that way."

At the time his father's store was burning he had heard some of the firemen speak of the wind, and Teddy remembered this now.

"I wouldn't want our bungalow to burn," went on Janet. "If I thought it was I'd get out my dolls."

"An' I want my fire engine!" wailed Trouble. "I don't want it to burn up! Oh, dear!"

"It won't burn," Janet consoled him. "Come, we'll go home," she added. "I see mother calling us."

Mrs. Martin was in the doorway of the bungalow, beckoning to the children. When the sawdust pile caught fire she had come to see where they were.

"Come in out of the way!" she called, and they ran to her.

By this time a gang of the lumbermen were starting to put out the fire. There was a short length of hose from which a small stream of water spurted, and, for a time, Ted wondered where it came from, as he knew there were no fire engines in the woods.

"How did it start, Mother?" asked Janet.

"By sparks from the sawmill engine smoke stack, I think," was the answer.

"Will it burn the store?" asked Trouble.

"I think not," his mother replied. "And see, the men are pulling the sawdust pile

apart to get the burning side away from that which hasn't yet started to burn."

The lumbermen saw that this was the only way to stop the fire from spreading. As yet only one side of the sawdust pile was on fire. Working on the side that was not yet blazing, with shovels and long sticks, the men were pulling the mass of fine, wooden dust into two parts.

It was just as if you had set fire to one side of a big pile of leaves, and then found that you didn't want to burn them all. If you had no water to throw on the fire you could, with a rake, pull off to one side in the street those leaves that had not already caught fire. Then you could let those that had caught burn out.

That is what the lumbermen did. They separated the sawdust pile in two parts, with a space between them. There was a little water to squirt on the blaze, but not much. The small hose came from the water tank with which the boiler of the sawmill engine was filled, and this stream, with no pump behind to force it out, only dribbled a little way.

"Don't waste that water on the fire!" cried Tod Everett.

"Why not?" asked one of the men.

"Because we haven't enough. Use the hose to wet the ground between the two piles, and then the fire won't travel over."

This was good advice, for the fire in the blazing part of the sawdust was now so strong that it would have taken a large stream of water to put it out. But a little water would answer to wet the space between the two piles of dust, and this the foreman wanted done.

His men heeded what he said, and soon most of the danger was over. The larger pile of clean sawdust had been pulled far to one side so it would not catch, and the remainder was allowed to burn itself out.

"Couldn't I squirt with my engine just a little bit?" begged Trouble, when he saw that the excitement was dying out with the fire.

"No, indeed," his mother told him. "Fires are good places to stay away from for little boys."

"I'm gettin' to be a big boy. Daddy said so," pouted Trouble.

"Well, you aren't big enough, yet, to put out fires." his mother remarked, with a laugh.

But a little later the fire was so nearly out that she took the Curlytops and Trouble close to see what damage had been done. Aside from a few boards and the sawdust that had been burned, the loss was small. There was no loss in the sawdust, for it was of no use. Some farmers living near by used to come to get a load or two to fill their ice houses, but the remainder was allowed to rot in the forest.

After the fire was over Mr. Martin and Tod Everett, the foreman, began asking how it had started. No one had really seen the first tiny blaze begin, but it was thought that sparks from the smoke stack of the sawmill must have started it. This seemed most likely.

"Then you had better put a spark arrester on that stack," said Mr. Martin to the mill foreman.

"I will," agreed Mr. Everett. "We don't want any more blazes. The next time more than sawdust might go up in smoke. I intended to have a spark arrester on that stack all along, but there has been so much to do, starting this new camp, that I haven't got at it. But I surely will make a spark arrester now."

"Mother, how can they arrest sparks?" Trouble asked in a whisper, as he heard this talk. "Does they have a policeman to arrest sparks?"

"If they do he'd have to travel in an airship!" laughed Ted. "For the sparks are always flying through the air."

"Mr. Everett didn't mean a policeman, dear," explained Mrs. Martin to Trouble. "He means a spark arrester would stop the sparks from flying from the stacks. Arrest means to stop, you know."

"How do they stop the sparks," asked Ted.

"Generally they put a piece of wire netting over the top of the chimney or smokestack," his mother answered. "The smoke can go through the netting, but the sparks can't. It is the big, red hot sparks, flying from the stack, that do the damage. In most locomotives there are these spark arresters of iron or wire netting."

"I never saw any," Janet said.

"That's because they are set down inside the locomotive smokestack," was the answer.

The next day the children watched men fasten a heavy piece of wire netting over the top of the sawmill smokestack.

Of all the places about the lumber camp where the Curlytops best liked to be, the sawmill was their choice. They liked to watch the big trees chopped or sawed down, they were fond of lingering near the log chute, and they delighted to see the men build timber rafts on the river and float on them.

But the sawmill they liked best of all. There was a delightfully clean smell about it—a smell of the woods as the logs were cut into boards, the sawdust flying about in a cloud. The saw, too, made such a funny "zipping" sound. First there would be a low hum, as the sharp teeth bit into the end of the log. Then the sound would become higher and shriller as the saw turned faster and faster.

Finally there would sound a whine, like that of some animal, and the saw would come to the end of the log with a "zip," and then there would be only a low, pleasant hum.

The saw was not the only piece of machinery in the mill that moved. Another piece was the "carriage," on which the log was carried toward the saw. This carriage was a frame work on which the log rested

as it went forward inch by inch and foot by foot to be cut into board lengths. Besides the carriage there was a log chain, winding around a drum.

The logs were brought near the end of the long incline up which they were first hauled by this chain. On the end of the chain was a great hook. This hook would either be driven into the log by one of the men pounding it with his axe, or the chain would be wrapped about the log and the hook caught in the chain.

"Pull away!" the lumberman would call to the engineer. The engineer would then shove over a handle, the chain would begin to wind itself up around the drum and the log would be hauled up to the saw carriage.

Other men would take off the chain and roll the log in place, fastening it on the carriage so it would not slip.

"All ready!" they would call, and the engineer would pull another handle which would start the carriage, carrying the log, end on, toward the big buzz saw.

At certain times, when she could be with them, the Curlytops and Trouble were taken by their mother to the sawmill. And when there was a long log on the carriage, just

starting to be cut up, she would let them sit down on the far end of the traveling frame and "ride." This was the greatest fun of all.

It was almost as good as being an engineer of the mill, Ted used to think. As for Janet, she pretended the slow-moving log and the carriage on which it rested was a chariot drawn by big elephants going through the jungle.

As for Trouble, he liked to pretend that the sawmill carriage and log was his "horsie," and he sat astride the log and cried:

"Gid-dap! Gid-dap!"

Now, without anyone knowing it, Trouble had watched the engineer of the mill pull the handles that started the machinery until the little fellow, who was very smart, felt sure he could do it himself. He only wanted the chance, and he knew he must be alone, for he felt sure his mother would not let him go there if she saw him.

So, watching his opportunity, Trouble one day stole away to the sawmill. As it happened, the machinery was not running, though the power needed but to be turned on, and none of the men was in the place.

It was Trouble's chance. He had the whole mill to himself.

"I get a wide," he murmured.

He toddled to the handle he had so often seen the engineer pull when he wanted to start the saw to buzzing and the carriage to rolling along. There was a big log already in place.

Trouble pulled. At first nothing happened. He pulled again, harder than before. There was a hissing sound, a low rumble, and the saw began slowly to revolve. Then the carriage started gently forward.

"I do it!" cried Trouble in delight. "Now I get a wide!"

He ran to the far end of the log and carriage and sat down, pretending that he was astride his "horse."

Trouble was having a ride! But it was a dangerous ride!

CHAPTER XIX

THE CURLYTOPS ADRIFT

LUCKY it was for Trouble that Tod Everett, the foreman, caught the sound of the moving machinery—the creaking of the log carriage and the buzz of the big saw that was beginning to whine as if hungry to bite into the log on which the little boy was riding.

And as soon as Tod heard the sound of the machinery he knew something was wrong. One reason was because it was not yet time to start. Another reason was that the engineer of the mill was standing right beside him, talking about a new lot of logs that had been floated down the river that day.

The two men looked at one another as the sound came to their ears, and the foreman cried:

"Who's running the mill for you, Zeb?"

"Nobody," answered Zeb White, the en-

gineer. "She isn't supposed to be runnin'!"

"Well, she *is* running!" declared Tod.

"I believe you're right!" cried the engineer. "But who could have started her?"

Without another word the two men ran up the little hill, for they were at the bottom of it and away from the mill, and could not look into the place. But when they reached the top they could hear the rattle of the moving carriage more plainly. They could hear the whine and hum of the big saw.

And then they saw Trouble calmly sitting astride the log, playing it was his horse, and, all the while, drawing nearer and nearer to the sharp-toothed saw.

"Whew!" whistled the foreman. "That kid is in mischief again!"

"Do you reckon he started my engine?" cried Zeb.

Tod Everett did not answer. He sprang to catch Trouble off the log, pulling him to one side rather roughly in his strong arms. At the same time the engineer ran for the handle that shut off the power. He pulled it quickly, with all his strength, and the saw slowly ceased buzzing, while the log on the carriage no longer moved forward.

"Say, you little tyke!" cried Tod, for he was angry, "did you start the machinery?"

"Yes, I did start it," answered Trouble, hardly knowing whether to laugh or cry. "What for you take me off my horsie?" he asked.

"Horsie? Say, you don't want to ride this dangerous kind of horse again!" cried the engineer. "That big saw might have cut you!"

He, too, spoke sternly, and Trouble decided that all fun had gone out of the world. He began to cry. He cried hard, too.

By this time his mother, who had missed him, had come out in search of him. It took her only a few moments to understand what had happened.

"Trouble, you are a naughty boy!" she said.

"I not naughty!" he sobbed. "I wanted a wide—a wide on my saw horsie!"

"Yes, you were bad," went on his mother, with a grave face. "I told you never to come to the mill alone, and you didn't mind. I told you never to touch a handle or anything, and you didn't mind. You are a bad boy!"

Trouble sobbed again, looked from one to

the other of the three stern faces in a circle about him.

"Ye—yes, I—I *is* a bad boy!" he admitted.

"And you must be whipped," his mother told him.

I wish I did not have to write about this part of it, but I have undertaken to tell you all about the Curlytops and Trouble, and I must put in the bad with the good.

Trouble was whipped, and he cried hard. But this was better than crying after being hurt by the saw, as might have happened. And the whipping was the best way in the world to make Trouble remember never again to go near the machinery alone.

"I'll see that he never does such a thing again," said Mrs. Martin.

"And I'll never leave the mill alone again, with the power ready to be turned on," said the engineer.

So it all ended more happily than it might have, if the machinery had not been stopped in time. And though the Curlytops felt sorry for their little brother, it was not as bad as it might have been, for which they were very thankful.

As a further punishment, and to make

him remember not to do such a thing again, Trouble was not allowed to go with Teddy and Janet the next time they had a picnic in the woods.

They were always having picnics—sometimes two in one day. But they enjoyed the tramps in the forest and they had no end of fun eating the lunches they begged from their father in the camp store.

This time they went on a picnic the day after Trouble had had his "wide," as he called it, on the saw carriage. That is Ted and Janet went, and William remained at home. He wanted to go, very much, but his mother was firm, and though the Curlytops felt sad to hear their little brother cry to come with them, they were old enough to know it was for his own good that he must stay at home.

"What'll we do?" asked Ted, as he and his sister walked through the forest. Ted very often left it to Janet to suggest some form of fun.

"Let's look for the tame crow," proposed the little girl. "I'd like to find him and take him back to Mr. Jenk."

"So would I," agreed Ted. "We'd get a lot of money then."

"And the crow is in these woods," went on Janet. "I'm sure we saw him that time the woodpecker was tapping."

"Yes, that was Mr. Jenk's crow all right," said her brother. "But how can we catch him?"

Janet thought for a minute. Then she remembered something that had happened back home.

"Oh, Ted!" she cried. "Cheese!"

"Cheese? What do you mean?" he asked.

"Don't you remember how fond the Jim crow was of cheese?" went on Janet. "Whenever he used to get away Mr. Jenk would go after him, calling and holding out a bit of cheese. And Jim would fly down to get the cheese and Mr. Jenk would catch him."

"Oh, yes!" cried Teddy. "And then he'd make believe pull corks. I mean the crow would," he added, though Janet understood.

"Let's go back to daddy's store and get some cheese," proposed Janet. She called it "daddy's store," though Mr. Martin did not own it and had only been engaged to start it going. But the children always thought of the camp store as they did of

the one in Cresco, as belonging to their father.

"Yes, we'll make a cheese trap," agreed Ted.

Mr. Martin was not in the store when they trudged back, but one of the clerks gave them what they wanted.

"Don't eat too much cheese," he warned them. "It isn't good for Curlytops."

"Oh we're not going to eat it," said Janet.

"It's for the lame, tame crow," added Ted.

"What in the world are those kiddies up to now, I wonder," said one clerk to another. "Talking about a lame, tame crow, and taking him out some cheese!"

"Don't ask me," chuckled his companion. "They do more things in a day than I could think of in a week. And that small chap—the one they call Trouble—say, he's a *tyke!*"

"He certainly is. Well, I only hope they won't get sick eating the cheese, and have Mr. Martin blame me for giving it to them."

However, Ted and Janet had no idea of eating the cheese, though they liked a little nibble now and then. But this cheese was for the lame, tame crow they were sure they had seen in the woods. They were quite cer-

tain it was Mr. Jenk's black pet and they hoped to get the ten dollars reward.

But the woods at Mount Major and around their camp were wide and long, and though the children did not know it, hunting for a certain crow in them was like looking for a needle in the haystack.

On and on through the woods tramped the Curlytops. It was a pleasant day and it was early, for they had set off on their picnic soon after dinner. They had with them some lunch for themselves and the cheese for the crow—if they should happen to find Jim.

Every now and then they would stop and listen, and often they heard the distant caw-ing of crows. But this was what happened every day in the woods. There were many crows.

"And they all sound alike when they caw," said Ted.

"Yes, but Jim crow can pop corks, and no other crow can do that," said Janet. "And he can stand on one leg in such a funny way."

"Yes," admitted her brother, "if we hear a cork popping we'll know it's Jim."

But they heard nothing like this as they

wandered on through the woods. Sometimes they even caught glimpses of crows flying overhead, but these black birds did not come down low enough to see the pieces of cheese which the Curlytops held out to them, hoping that one of the crows might be Mr. Jenk's Jim.

"Oh, dear!" sighed Janet after a while. "I guess we'll never find that crow. It's like mother's diamond locket that I lost. I guess it's gone forever."

"Maybe the locket is," agreed Ted. "But we've seen the crow, so we know he's somewhere around here."

"But where?" asked his sister.

And Ted could not answer.

Still they did not give up. They had come to the woods to spend the afternoon. They could eat about three o'clock when they usually got hungry, and they might as well hunt for Jim as do anything else or play any of their pretend games.

"I'm tired," said Janet, after a bit. "Let's sit down and rest."

"And eat," added Teddy. He was nearly always ready to do the latter.

So the children sat down on a mossy log in the pleasant shade of the forest and

opened the little boxes of lunch they had obtained in the store.

"Before we eat we'll spread out some of the cheese," said Janet. "Maybe Jim will smell it and fly down."

Teddy thought this would be all right, so they put some bits of cheese on a flat stump not far from where they sat down to eat their own lunch.

As they ate they kept an anxious watch, and also listened closely for any sound of cawing in the air overhead. But, for some reason or other, the crows, perhaps Jim with them, had flown away for the time being.

"Well, I guess there's no crow here," said Janet after a while, as she stood up and brushed the crumbs from her lap. "Let's go on."

"All right," agreed Ted. "But we'll leave some of the cheese here, and when we come back we'll look again for Jim."

"Maybe if we tapped on a tree like the woodpecker did, Jim would hear it and come to us," suggested Janet.

"Maybe," her brother said. "Let's try it."

With sticks the children tapped on trees, making a noise as nearly like the sound of a

woodpecker as they could manage. But this brought to them no tame crow, and, indeed, no wild one, either.

"Well, let's go on," said Teddy.

Part of the cheese was left on the flat stump where they had spread it as bait. The remainder they picked up and took with them farther into the woods. They were having fun, even if they didn't find the lame, tame crow.

After a little while the Curlytops came to an open place in the forest. Across it they saw water gleaming in the sun.

"Oh, there's the lake!" cried Ted. "I didn't know it came up this way."

The lake was of odd shape, and parts of it, like the arms of an octopus, stretched out into different parts of the woods.

"I'm going in wading!" cried Ted.

"So will I!" added Janet.

They took off their shoes and stockings and splashed about in the clean, warm water of the lake near shore. Then Ted discovered a boat hidden in the bushes on shore.

"Oh, let's have a ride!" he called to Janet.

"There aren't any oars," she objected, as Ted pulled the boat out so he could get in.

"That's nothing," he said. "We can take

poles and push ourselves around. Come on, I'll be captain! We'll have lots of fun!"

Janet was always ready for fun.

"We must take our shoes and stockings," she said. "If we leave 'em here somebody might steal 'em."

"Yes, we'll take 'em in the boat, and the lunch, too," her brother agreed.

They quickly put their things in the old scow, for that is all the boat was, and then, having found some poles in the woods, the Curlytops pushed out from shore.

Soon they were adrift, moving slowly along the beach, first Ted and then Janet pushing with their poles to keep the boat moving. It was warm and pleasant out on the lake, and the Curlytops thought they were having fine fun.

"Let's go out a little farther," proposed Ted.

"I'm afraid," confessed Janet.

"Oh, we can easily pole ourselves back," said Ted.

So they went out a little farther. They were more than a hundred feet from shore when Janet suddenly gave a cry.

"What's the matter?" called Ted.

"I lost my push-pole!" his sister answered.

"I'll get it for you," Ted offered.

He pushed the boat toward his sister's floating pole, but, in doing so, lost hold of his own.

"Now mine's gone!" he cried.

Then the wind suddenly blew, sending the boat farther away from the two poles. They now had no means of moving the boat unless they paddled with their hands. Ted tried this, but could not make the craft come any nearer the drifting poles.

"Oh, how far out we are from shore!" cried Janet. "Let's go back, Ted."

Ted tried, but it was of no use. The wind was blowing them farther and farther out into the lake.

CHAPTER XX

THE CROW'S NEST

THE Curlytops were frightened at first when they found that they were adrift in the old boat with neither oars nor poles with which to guide themselves back to shore. But after the first fright Ted laughed and said:

"We'll go on a voyage; we have something to eat."

"How far 'll we go?" asked Janet, still a bit alarmed.

"Oh, across to the other shore," and Ted pointed to the other side of the lake. It was about half a mile away, though once on that shore the children might not have been able to find a path back. For the shore of the lake went winding in and out like the edges of a blot of ink when you splatter a drop on a sheet of paper.

"I wish we could get the poles," murmured Janet. "Then we could push our selves back."

"I'll try again," offered Teddy, and he began paddling hard with his hands over the side of the boat, endeavoring to send the craft back to where the two poles could be seen floating.

But as Teddy paddled with his hands only on one side of the boat, it was just the same as if he had rowed with one oar. The scow began to go around in a circle.

"It's like a merry-go-round!" chuckled Ted.

"But you mustn't do it!" complained Janet. "It makes me dizzy to go around like that!"

"Well, you paddle on your side then," suggested Ted. "That's what we have to do —paddle on both sides."

This was true; just as when you want a boat to go straight you must row with two oars, one on each side, and you must pull evenly on each oar.

Putting her shoes and stockings with Ted's, up in the bow of the boat, Janet began paddling with her hands on one side,

while her brother paddled on the other side. In this way they managed to send the boat back a little way, even though the wind was blowing in the opposite direction.

"We're getting nearer to the poles," cried Teddy. "I think I can reach one now. Stop paddling, Janet!"

She stopped and Teddy leaned over the side of the boat. He stretched his hands out as far as he could reach, but as soon as the paddling stopped the boat began to drift back again, blown by the wind. Wider and wider became the space between Ted's outstretched hands and the floating poles.

"Look out!" cried Janet. "You'll fall over!"

And Ted came very nearly doing this. Just in time he leaned back and sat down in the bottom of the boat.

"You can't get those poles!" sighed Janet.

"Yes, I can!" declared Teddy. He was not a boy to give up easily. He started paddling with his hands again, as did Janet. Once more they were almost within reach of the poles, but the wind blew them back.

"I—I guess I can't do it," Teddy had to admit, rather out of breath.

"Let's drift over to the other shore, and

then we can get out of the boat and walk home," suggested Janet.

This seemed the best plan to follow. So the Curlytops sat in the boat and tried to pretend that they were enjoying the voyage and having a good time. But, to tell you the truth, they were rather worried and frightened.

The wind was now blowing stronger, but the children saw that this would, all the more quickly, send them to the opposite shore.

"Let's eat!" suggested Ted, after a bit. "We'll make believe we're shipwrecked sailors and we'll eat."

"But don't eat the cheese," objected Janet. "We might find Jim the crow on the other shore, and we could catch him with some cheese."

"All right," agreed Teddy. He was not very fond of cheese anyhow, and he was willing that Jim should have it—if they could find Jim.

They were more than half way across the little bay, or arm of the lake, and they could see that the other shore was a sandy one on which to land when, from the woods they had left, came a shout.

"Where you children going with that boat?" hailed a man.

Looking back Janet and Ted saw a stranger standing on the shore near the place where they had dragged out the craft which had been hidden under the bushes. The man had a pair of oars in his hand, and it was evident that he had come to use his boat. He had probably taken the oars back home with him, knowing that the boat could not be taken far without them.

"Where you going with my boat?" he asked, rather angrily.

"We didn't mean to take it away," Ted called back. The talk could plainly be heard, as voices carry well over water, you know.

"Well, what did you take it away for?" asked the man, who was a stranger to the Curlytops. "That's my boat. I want to go fishing in it and now you have it."

"We'd bring it back if we could," Teddy called back. "We're sorry. We only went out a little way but we lost our poles and we can't get back."

The man stood there and seemed to be thinking for a moment. Then he laughed and said:

"Well, sit quiet and don't fall out. You'll

be at the other shore soon. Land there and make the boat fast. I'll walk around and row you back. Don't be afraid."

The Curlytops felt better after this. They watched the man turn back with his oars over his shoulder. He was soon lost to sight in the bushes. Then Ted and Janet looked toward the other shore which was coming nearer and nearer. Of course they were really coming nearer to the shore, for the land did not move. But in the boat it looked as though it did.

The wind blew in puffs, and when one stronger than those before it struck the boat it blew it well up on the sandy beach. Ted jumped out and pulled the boat farther up on shore, while Janet remained in it.

"Now you can get out," Ted told her. "We'll stay here until the man walks around and rows us back."

"He was a good man, wasn't he?" asked Janet, as she handed Ted his shoes and stockings.

"Yes," he agreed. "He wasn't very cross 'cause we took his boat. I didn't know it was anybody's—hid like that in the bushes."

"I didn't, either," agreed Janet, as she and her brother put on their shoes.

There was nothing to do until the man came, for the Curlytops were on a strange shore and did not want to wander away and get lost. So they sat down on stones, near where Ted had tied the boat to keep it from drifting away, and they ate what little lunch remained.

"What'll I do with this cheese?" asked Ted. "I don't s'pose we're going to find any crows."

"No," admitted Janet slowly. "But maybe——"

Then she stopped suddenly, for in the air overhead sounded a loud:

"Caw! Caw! Caw!"

"Oh, look!" whispered Janet.

Fluttering down from the sky was a big, black bird. It flew to a low stump of a tree, not far from where the children sat, and there the crow perched, still cawing.

In wonder and hope the children watched the crow. The bird turned its head from side to side, and seemed to be looking about for any danger. He appeared to see the Curlytops, but did not mind them.

Then the crow began moving about on the edge of the stump, stirring up something down in the hollow of it.

"Oh, Ted!" cried Janet. "I believe that crow has a nest in the stump!"

"It does look so," admitted her brother.

As the two children saw the crow stepping about Janet observed something else. Eagerly she clutched Ted's arm and whispered:

"Ted, that crow is lame, just like Mr. Jenk's!"

"And he's tame, too," said Teddy. "He isn't a bit afraid of us. I'm going to offer him some cheese!" He held out a bit in his hand to the black bird. "Here, Jim! Jim!" coaxed Teddy. "Here's cheese for you!"

"Caw! Caw!" croaked the glossy bird, head on one side. It fluttered its wings and seemed about to fly toward Teddy to get the cheese.

"Oh, Ted! I'm going to tap like a woodpecker!" said Janet. "And you snap your fingers. If that's Jim, the lame, tame crow, he'll stand on one leg and he'll pull a cork!"

"We'll try it!" exclaimed Teddy.

Janet tapped on a tree near her, using a stick to make the sound. Teddy snapped his fingers as well as he was able. Instantly the crow stopped cawing. It turned its head on one side and then, a moment later, stood

on one leg, thrusting the other—the lame one—out from him like a stiff stick.

"Look, Teddy! Look!" whispered Janet.

"Snap! Snap!" went Teddy's chubby fingers.

"Pop! Pop!" exploded the crow, like a cork coming from a bottle.

"Oh, it's Jim! It's Mr. Jenk's lame, tame crow, Jim! We've found him!" shouted Janet in delight. "We've found him!"

Then, with another hoarse caw, the crow flew over and began picking at the cheese in Teddy's hand.

There was no doubt of it, they had found the lame crow. Jim was so tame, and he knew the Curlytops so well, that he allowed his black feathers to be stroked as he picked at the cheese. He seemed to be enjoying himself very much.

"Now we've got him how are we going to keep him?" asked Ted. "He may fly away again."

"You could tie a string to his leg," suggested Janet.

"I will!" decided her brother. He had plenty of string in his pocket. Putting the cheese down on a log, where Jim could pick

at it, Ted soon tied a strong cord around the crow's sound leg. The other end of the cord Ted fastened to his waist to have both his hands free.

While he was doing this Janet walked over to the low stump where the crow had what might be called his nest, though wild crows always build in the highest trees they can find. Janet looked down in the hollow stump. She saw bits of mussel shells, some bright pebbles, a lot of hair from the tails of horses and a shiny piece of tin. Then she saw something else that caused her to cry out in wonder.

"What is it?" asked Teddy, who had tied Jim fast to him.

"Oh, look what I've found!" gasped Janet. She held up something glittering and shiny that dangled to and fro. "It's mother's diamond locket and chain that we were playing house with!" cried Janet. "I've found mother's lost locket in Jim crow's nest! Oh, how glad I am!"

"So am I!" said Teddy, rejoicing with his sister. "But how did it get here?"

"Jim must have flown over to our house and picked it up off the box when we ran

out to see the auto accident," answered Janet.

And that is exactly how it had happened. Of course Jim could not talk and tell about it, for he could only pull corks and whistle. But from what is known of crows—how fond they are of bright things—it could easily be guessed what had happened.

Jim, flying away from Mr. Jenk's house, had seen the glittering locket where Janet had left it for a moment as she and her brothers hurried out to the street. The crow had picked it up and had flown off to the woods with it, as they often do with bright and shining things that take their fancy.

Being a tame crow, Jim had made his nest in a low stump instead of a high tree, and there he had dropped the diamond locket, having really no further use for it. And there it had been all this while. Jim must have liked his new freedom, for he did not fly back to Mr. Jenk's house, though very likely the lame crow the children once saw was this same Jim.

"Oh, everything is coming out all right!" happily cried Janet, as she looked at the diamond ornament. "I've found mother's

locket that I thought I'd lost, and we have Mr. Jenk's crow."

"We'll get ten dollars, too," laughed Ted.

The man who owned the boat came. He was surprised when he heard the children's story, and said he often had known crows to fly away with bright things.

"Well, I'll have three passengers to row back, instead of two," he said, with a laugh. "Where do you live?" he asked the Curlytops.

"At Mount Major, near the sawmill," they told him.

"I know where it is," he said. "I'll soon have you there."

A little later when he rowed up to the bungalow dock he found Mr. and Mrs. Martin just beginning to get worried about Ted and Janet.

You can imagine how surprised everyone was when the Curlytops came back, not only with the missing crow but also the diamond locket.

"I never saw such lucky children!" chuckled Tod Everett.

"Caw! Caw!" croaked the crow, as if of the same opinion. Jim did not try to get away. He seemed to have had enough of

freedom. But no chances were taken and he was kept fastened by a string until he could be sent back to Mr. Jenk.

True to his promise, the owner of the lame, tame crow paid the ten dollar reward to Teddy and Janet. Part of the money was given them to spend, and the remainder was put in the bank for them.

"We've certainly had a fine summer in the woods," said Mr. Martin, when the time came to go back, for he had the camp store in good running order now.

"It was the best time we ever had!" agreed Teddy.

"And it was exciting, too," added Janet.

"I'm glad I have my little diamond locket back," said Mrs. Martin.

"An' I glad I got a new fire engine, an' it squirts weal water!" laughed Trouble, for Ted and Janet had taken part of their reward money and bought him a new toy.

So all ended happily. But this is not the end of the adventures of the Curlytops, for there are more to follow. But, for a while, we will bid them good-bye.

THE END

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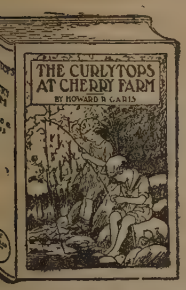

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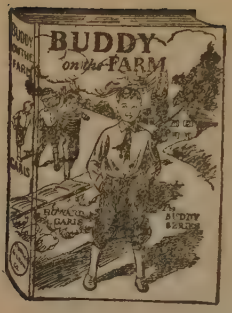

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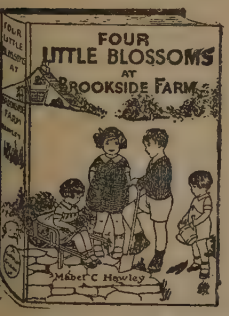

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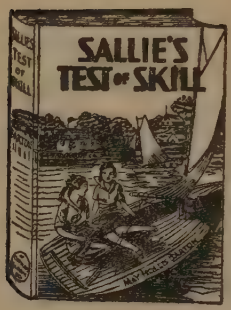

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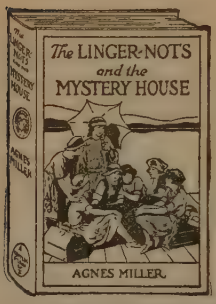

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